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# Identifying Determinants of Migration for Alumni of the Nebraska Human Resources Institute

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IDENTIFYING DETERMINANTS OF MIGRATION FOR ALUMNI OF THE  
NEBRASKA HUMAN RESOURCES INSTITUTE

By

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A THESIS

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IDENTIFYING DETERMINANTS OF MIGRATION FOR ALUMNI OF THE  
NEBRASKA HUMAN RESOURCES INSTITUTE

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University of Nebraska, 2014

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Many Midwestern and Nebraska communities are experiencing a net out-migration of citizens, with a particular decline among college graduates. As older generations begin to retire in the next few decades, many management occupations will be transferred to a younger generation, making it vital to retain young leaders in Nebraska communities. The current study focuses on young adult leaders who would be perhaps prime candidates to fill this impending leadership void. One hundred nineteen alumni of the Nebraska Human Resources Institute (NHRI), a leadership mentoring program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, who graduated college between 2007-2014 rated various migration, community, and life factors that influenced their decision to live in their current community. The descriptive study survey instrument sought to identify factors most important in the migration decisions of NHRI alumni, factors that are most important to NHRI alumni who chose to either live in Nebraska or live outside of Nebraska, and factors that are statistically significant in assessing the likelihood of in-state or out-of-state migration patterns for NHRI alumni. Results of the study indicated that all NHRI alumni are highly influenced by career factors such as *to obtain a job where I can make a difference*. NHRI alumni who chose to live in Nebraska placed more importance on living near friends and family, along with living in comfortable communities. NHRI

alumni who chose to live outside of Nebraska placed a higher emphasis on graduate school opportunities. The findings are valuable to Nebraska communities as they seek to retain and attract talented, community-oriented citizens.

*Keywords:* Migration, Generativity, Social Responsibility, Millennial Generation

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

Many Midwestern communities are facing challenges to their vitality. This collective pressure requires action from policymakers and community leaders. While the general United States population increased by 9.7% from 2000 to 2010, many counties in the Midwest experienced population declines (Mackun & Wilson, 2011). U.S. Census data showed that the Midwest region of the country experienced the nation's highest out-migration rate at 28.7% (Ishitani, 2011). Generally, rural areas, concentrated in the Midwest, experienced a 2.7% decline in population from 2000 to 2010 (United States Census Bureau, 2010). The states of Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota collectively saw college graduates depart at a rate of 10.8% from 1971 to 1991 (Kodrzycki, 2001). Moreover, between 2000 and 2004, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates 76 Nebraska counties experienced net out-migration, while 46 experienced more deaths than births (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2005).

In addition to population declines, many rural communities have experienced a decline in membership in community organizations, donations to community groups or organizations, and leadership roles held in community groups over the past 10 years (Vogt, Burkhart-Kriesel, Cantrell & Lubben, 2012). Moreover, the out-migration appears to threaten the future vitality of community endowments, established with the purpose of supporting local education, health care, entrepreneurship, and other local initiatives.

A key issue for community endowments is the impending retirement of the Baby Boomer generation. The Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, are one of the largest generations in U.S. history and named for the dramatic increase in birth rates

following World War II (Hogan, Perez, & Bell, 2008; Masnick, 2012). The Baby Boomer generation in the United States, comprised of approximately 75 million workers (Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, & Lance, 2010), has already begun to retire or will soon retire and distribute their assets to family, organizations, causes, etc. As a result, Macke, Markley, and Binerer (2011) predict a \$75 trillion transfer of wealth from older to younger generations in the United States from 2010 to 2060. Moreover, there is an expected \$600 billion transfer of wealth from Nebraska's older generation to its heirs over the next 50 years; however, the extent to which this money is invested and endowed in the Nebraska communities where the wealth was created is threatened due to the out-migration of potential heirs (Nebraska Community Foundation, 2011).

Furthermore, Baby Boomers are currently occupying the vast majority of leadership positions in today's labor market. Currently, employed individuals aged 45 and over hold approximately 56 percent of all management occupations in the United States (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). Since the Baby Boomers are between the ages of 47 and 65, and are beginning to retire or will be retiring in the near future, over half of all management occupations will be transferred to a younger generation within the next two decades, creating the need to identify and attract talented young leaders to engage their workplace and community in future growth (Howden & Meyer, 2010).

The current study focuses on young adult leaders who would be prime candidates to fill this impending leadership void. A critical function of higher education is to prepare students to be civically engaged citizens, making them attractive to retain in their home community (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Civic engagement is characteristic of the psychosocial construct, generativity. Generativity is defined as "the concern in

establishing and guiding the next generation” (Erikson, 1963, p. 267) and has been found to be the highest predictor of social responsibility (i.e., contribute time and money to building a strong family and community) (Rossi, 2001). Hastings (2012) compared generativity levels among 273 college students at a public, four-year Midwestern university. In particular, Hastings compared generativity levels among general college students, college student leaders who were not mentoring, and college student leaders who were mentoring through the Nebraska Human Resources Institute (NHRI) leadership program. In NHRI, college mentors are selected according to their capacity to positively influence others. The college mentors meet weekly with an identified young leader in the Lincoln, Nebraska area. The college mentor’s goal is to identify and develop the leadership strengths of the younger leader. According to data results from Hastings’ study, college students who mentored in NHRI demonstrated significantly higher generativity than the two control groups. Citing Rossi’s (2001) study, Hastings concluded that these students are most likely among their peers to be socially responsible.

To address the departure of young, highly educated citizens from Midwestern, and more specifically, Nebraska communities, it would be prudent for community leaders and policymakers to understand motivating factors for college students as they decide their future location upon college graduation. Currently, limited research has been performed in this area (Kodrzycki, 2001). Moreover, to simultaneously address the decline in a community's civic participation, community leaders and policymakers need to understand how college students, and in this case college student leaders who demonstrated significantly higher generativity, make location decisions upon graduation, because those students are more likely to be socially responsible (Hastings, 2012; Rossi,

2001). Therefore, the purpose of this descriptive study was to identify factors influencing the migration decisions of college graduates who participated in NHRI while in college.

## CHAPTER II

### Literature Review

#### **Migration**

Individuals migrate from one location to another for various reasons. It might be in search of work, closer proximity to family, or other tangible incentives. Much of the migration literature is based on the seminal work of Larry Sjaastad, who observed migration to occur because migrants perceived future gains and opportunities to accrue in a given new location (Sjaastad, 1962). Sjaastad's work began the study of migration through a human capital lens, primarily explaining migration decisions through regional differences in economic opportunity variables, such as income and unemployment (Clark & Hunter, 1992). Other models, such as Tiebout's foundational 1956 study, consider local government spending to influence the locational decisions for citizens (Tiebout, 1956). Later, the hedonic wage approach considered an individual's difference in wages was offset by an increase in an individual's demand for site-specific amenities in a given location (Rosen, 1979). Thus, when individuals allow amenities to influence a migration decision, migrants pay for amenities in the form of higher cost of living and lower wages.

Though economic and amenity-driven migration models were popularized, the effects of amenities on migration were questionable (Greenwood & Hunt, 1989). Despite these questions, Clark and Cosgrove (1991) determined that both economic opportunity and amenities are important determinants of migration. Adding to the amenity literature, Krupka (2009) found that growing up in a certain location and investing in certain local amenities makes an individual more likely to prefer those amenities later in life (e.g., A

lifelong, committed snow skier from Colorado will probably not be serious about a job in Florida). Moreover, the age of a migrant affects the location-specific goods, both economic and non-economic, that will meet the demands of the migrant, with younger migrants (25-35 years) tending to be more influenced by economic variables and older migrants tending to be influenced by amenity offerings of a given location (Graves, 1979).

The variety of non-economic variables found to influence migration decisions is both long and obscure (i.e., wind speed). Examples of non-economic factors in the migration literature includes recreational opportunities (i.e., skiing in Colorado or surfing in California), climate, topography, area demographics and religious characteristics, and sets of retail and cultural opportunities (Ishitani, 2011; Krupka, 2009). In addition to site-specific amenities, another non-economic factor would be the “psychic” costs of moving, defined as the reluctance to leave familiar surroundings, family, and friends located in a particular area (Sjaastad, 1962, p. 85). Thus, an individual who perceives high psychic costs to migrating away from loved family and friends in a community will be unlikely to migrate due to those high psychic costs. It would take significant benefits of other forms to outweigh the cost of moving away from the familiar setting and people for that particular migrant.

While migration research for the general population is extensive, “surprisingly little systematic evidence exists on the factors influencing location decisions of recent graduates” (Kodrzycki, 2001, p. 13). Kodrzycki explored factors influencing the migration of college graduates by examining data from the United States’ National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) taken from 1979 to 1991. Results indicated that

five years after college graduation, 30 percent of graduates lived in a different state than where they attended college, and 39 percent lived in a different state than their college nine years after graduation. Graduates generally tended to move to states offering a combination of “high job growth, low unemployment, higher pay, lower housing costs, or better amenities” (p. 30). Those most likely to migrate were those who had moved in the past, either in childhood or to attend college. However, influential factors in a migration decision depend on each individual, including unobservable variables like specific job offers or personal relationships (Kodrzycki, 2001).

Ishitani (2011) examined the causes leading an in-state college student to move to a different state after graduation. Utilizing a multi-level analysis on the National Center for Education Statistics data from the year 2000, the most significant level of analysis in predicting out-migration behavior was individual characteristics, with significant individual characteristics including academic major, race, applications to multiple institutions, including out-of-state institutions, size of city where students graduated from college, and state amenities based on Morgan Quitno Press’ 2000 State Livable Rankings (see state amenity components listed in Appendix A). Among other findings, Ishitani found that Hispanic students were 55% more likely than Caucasian students to stay in their home state after graduating from in-state colleges, and students who applied to out-of-state institutions were more likely to migrate out of their home state after college.

**Nebraska rural migration.** The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Center for Rural Innovation conducted the Buffalo Commons studies in 2007 to understand the migration of Nebraskans in the state’s panhandle region (Burkhart-Kriesel & Cantrell, 2007). The study found that less than half of 19-24 year olds had plans to be in their

panhandle community in the next five years, and that the key factors influencing a decision to move to the panhandle included a simpler pace of life, a less congested place to live, to be closer to relatives, lower cost of housing, lower cost of living, and higher paying job. Additionally, the study found that new panhandle residents considered other locations before choosing their current community, indicating that a community can influence a migration decision through marketing and recruiting efforts.

Nebraska rural migration has been recently tracked by a group of researchers at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Vogt, Burkhart-Kriesel, Cantrell, & Lubben, 2012). The 19-29 age group had the highest rate of moving from their community at 21%, and 43% said they would move outside of Nebraska. With regard to community perceptions, 29% of persons living in or near communities with less than 500 persons say their community has changed for the worse during the past year, and persons in small communities are more likely to believe their community will be worse in ten years.

Cantrell (2005) reported that the population in non-metropolitan Nebraska communities is declining for three key reasons: “Declining birth numbers, death among a large senior population and out-migration by young people following their secondary school education” (Cantrell, 2005, p. 29). Additionally, the study observed that working age individuals who have rural Nebraska roots move back to the state, partially mitigating the effects of de-population.

### **Millennial Generation**

Though we know much about determinants of migration for college graduates and the general population, the subjects involved in those studies were members of the Baby



Boomer generation and Generation X. Masnick (2012) stated that Baby Boomers were born between 1946-1964, while Generation X, or the “baby bust,” was a period of relatively lower birth rates from 1965-1984. Moreover, Generation X was followed by the Millennial Generation, also known as Generation Y or the “echo boom,” which spans 1985-2004. Since migration due to site-specific amenities has differed among age groups (Graves, 1979), and the extent to which employment and amenities affect migration depend on the given time period and how preferences evolve over time, better understanding the generational characteristics of the Millennial Generation will help researchers gain insight into the determinants of their post-college migration (Clark & Hunter, 1992; Mueser & Graves, 1995).

Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman and Lance (2010) conducted an intergenerational study of high school seniors in the United States graduating from 1976 to 2006. The study revealed that the Millennial Generation places higher value on leisure and extrinsic rewards from work than the Baby Boomer generation. As a result, the study concluded that the Millennial Generation requires different managing techniques in the workplace, though these differences are not necessarily reflected in every member of the Millennial Generation. Moreover, previous studies of generational differences in work values employed cross-sectional methods—which cannot separate the effects of age and generation—and non-empirical data, leaving the topic on “shaky empirical ground” (Twenge et al., 2010, p. 1122). Another valid reason to consider generational idiosyncrasies in this study lies in life cycle stages regarding attitudes and decisions on work (Levenson, 2010). There can be a steep learning curve for new workers regarding

the true opportunities and limitations they will encounter. Thus, it can be challenging to measure career expectations and attitudes towards work across generations.

While a strict definition of the Millennial Generation varies among authors, it is generally acknowledged to begin with people born in the early 1980's through the end of the 1990's (Levenson, 2010). In the next decade, over half the U.S. workforce will be from the Millennial Generation (Pew Research Center, 2010). A study on the career expectations of millennials living in Canada placed great importance on the individualistic components of a job, stating "They had realistic expectations of their first job and salary, but were seeking rapid advancement and the development of new skills, while also ensuring a meaningful and satisfying life outside of work" (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010, p. 281). Millennials tend to have high expectations regarding work-life balance, social connections at work, career advancement, training and development, financial rewards, and personally fulfilling work (Hauw & Vos, 2010). Millennials also tend to have more formal educational training, with twice the college credentials as the Baby Boomers and Generation X (Levenson, 2010). Millennials are known for expecting and being comfortable in diverse environments, and their parents play an influential role in deciding what they want to do in the future (Smith, 2008). Therefore, millennials tend to focus on employment variables related to advancement, work-life balance, and financial rewards, which could reasonably influence their decision to migrate to a given community.

Another unique factor influencing the Millennial Generation is the level of student debt. The cost of college has risen faster than inflation from 1970 to the present, affecting how students approach their futures (Levenson, 2010). Student debt has

significantly impacted how graduates approach their career plans, buying a home, and buying a car, indicating the possibility that student debt is a factor to consider in this study (Baum & O'Malley, 2003). Moreover, college debt affects post-graduation employment decisions, with students avoiding low-paying jobs and seeking high-paying jobs, significantly impacting the make-up of workers in lower paying jobs in government, nonprofits, and education (Rothstein & Rouse, 2011).

### **Generativity and Social Responsibility**

While Kodrzycki (2001) and Ishitani (2011) sought to identify factors contributing to college graduate migration, little to no research has been conducted on the migration of college students displaying significant generativity. Generativity is a stage of psychosocial development, characteristic of one's personality and social development (Erikson, 1950). Generativity is situated as the seventh of eight psychosocial development stages, and is focused on the establishment and guidance of future generations (Erikson, 1950, 1963).

Erikson's model (see Figure 1) describes the development of an individual's lifespan of ego identity through a sequence of eight stages of contrasting developmental qualities. At each stage of contrast, there is the possibility for an individual to grow or fail to grow depending on the internal and social context. For example, the first stage of Basic Trust versus Mistrust occurs during infancy, and is based on the quality and reliability of care received by the infant. A stage is successfully developed when a child strikes hopeful balance between the opposing statements. Thus, if a child realizes a favorable balance between Basic Trust and Mistrust, the child advances to the next stage: Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt. Positive development of autonomy leads a child to

develop a sense of initiative and industry, as the child acquires feelings of power and personal control. When successfully advancing through the aforementioned stages, the child is groomed to develop a sense of self and independence, leading to the sixth stage of Intimacy versus Isolation. During young adulthood, an individual successfully satisfies the Intimacy versus Isolation stage developing meaningful, loving relationships with others.

Next, Generativity versus Stagnation characterizes the Adulthood stage of psychosocial development. Generativity refers to establishing and guiding the next generation, often through behaviors such as parenting, mentoring, or coaching. Generativity is contrasted by Stagnation, which reflects a tendency to be involved more with the self rather than in one's home, community, and world. The eighth stage is Ego Integrity versus Despair. Individuals experience this stage in old age, and reflect on their lives. An individual with a sense of ego-integrity feels satisfied with life, while an individual with despair tends to feel bitter and regretful.

<b>VIII Maturity</b>								Ego Integrity v. Despair
<b>VII Adulthood</b>							Generativity v. Stagnation	
<b>VI Young Adulthood</b>						Intimacy v. Isolation		
<b>V Puberty and Adolescence</b>					Identity v. Role Confusion			
<b>IV Latency</b>				Industry v. Inferiority				
<b>III Locomotor-Genital</b>			Initiative v. Guilt					
<b>II Muscular-Anal</b>		Autonomy v. Shame, Doubt						
<b>I Oral Sensory</b>	Basic Trust v. Mistrust							
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>

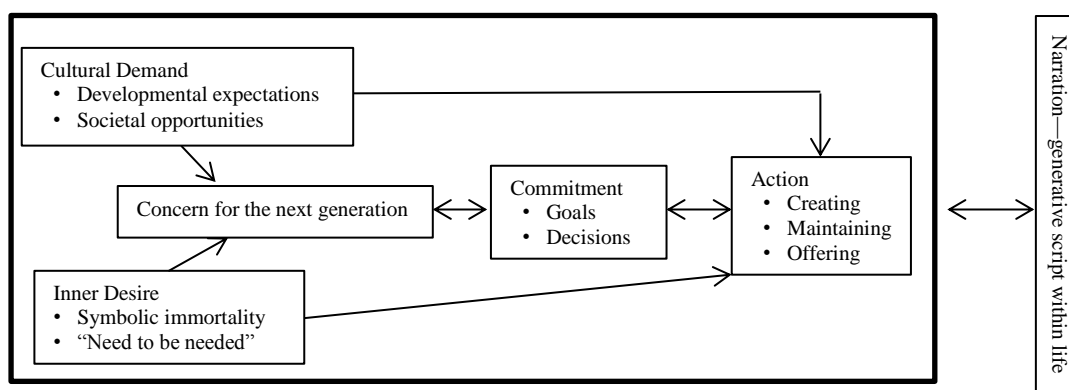
*Figure 1. Epigenetic chart of the life cycle (Erikson, 1950, 1963, p. 219)*

Gruen, working with Bernice Neugarten (1964), expanded on Erikson's work on generativity, explaining generative individuals as those who have plans for the future that require constant use of skills and abilities, invest energy into futuristic ideas, take an active interest in their children's development and education (if applicable), indicate a strong sense of continuity with the next generation, and direct efforts toward activities and products that will leave a legacy. Later, Erikson's definition of generativity was extended to "a desire to invest one's substance in forms of life and work that will outlive the self" (Kotre, 1984, p. 10). Macaux (2012) detailed characteristics of generativity as an attitude of care and inclusion, open to experience, tolerant of differences, creative-productive tendencies, broad scope of concern, other-focused (next generation), conscious of being a guide, generous, motivated to impart knowledge, encouraging of others to lead in their own style and voice, and emphasis on the interpersonal.

Though generativity can occur at various ages, generativity typically peaks during middle adulthood (30-50 years of age) due to social demands placed on adults through common roles such as parenting, mentoring, leadership, and service to others (Azarow, 2003; Erikson, 1950; Imada, 2004; McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992; McAdams, Hart, & Maruna, 1998). Erikson (1964) posited that parenthood is the first "prime generative encounter" (Erikson, 1964, p. 130).

McAdams and de St. Aubin (1992) established a conceptual model and methodological framework for generativity research and developed three methodological assessments: the Loyola Generativity Scale (LGS) to measure generative concern, the Generativity Behavior Checklist (GBC) to measure generative action, and personal narrative accounts to measure generative commitment. McAdams and de St. Aubin's

(1992) conceptual model of generativity (see Figure 2) was comprised of seven psychosocial features related to concern for the next generation: cultural demand, inner desire, generative concern, belief in the goodness of humans, generative commitment, generative action, and a personal narrative of generativity. While results from their study indicated that adults tend to peak in generativity during midlife, generativity was not exclusive to middle adulthood. McAdams and de St. Aubin argued that generative proclivities can be demonstrated at any life stage.



*Figure 2.* Theory of generativity (McAdams & de St. Aubin, 1992)

Hastings (2012) examined generativity levels among college students at a four-year public, Midwestern university. Utilizing the LGS, the GBC, and open-ended reports of personal strivings (Emmons, 1986), Hastings assessed generativity levels among college student leaders who were mentoring K-12 students in the Nebraska Human Resources Institute (NHRI), college student leaders who were not mentoring, and general college students. MANCOVA results revealed that college students who mentored in NHRI demonstrated significantly higher generativity than the general college students in all areas of generative concern, generative action, and generative commitment, after controlling for age, gender, G.P.A. range, and college major. In comparison to college student leaders who were not mentoring, college student leaders mentoring in NHRI

demonstrated significantly higher generativity in the areas of generative concern, as it relates to passing on knowledge to the next generation, as well as generative commitment. Hastings cited Rossi's (2001) work in social responsibility to conclude that college student leaders mentoring in NHRI are more likely to be socially responsible as adults because they demonstrated significantly higher generativity than their peers.

Rossi (2001) examined the relationship between generativity and social responsibility among 3,032 adults aged 25-79 utilizing the LGS and the national survey of midlife development in the United States (MIDUS). The most salient finding in Rossi's (2001) analysis was that a high LGS score was a significant predictor of social responsibility, or "the likelihood that respondents provide time and money to both family and community" (pp.116-117). In other words, a person who demonstrates high generativity is more likely to be socially responsible as an adult, contributing higher levels of time and money to family and community.

A summary of the literature finds that college graduates are influenced by both economic and non-economic factors in their post-college migration. However, there is no evidence demonstrating factors that influence the migration of college graduates who tend to be more generative, and thus, more likely to be socially responsible as adults.

### *Delimitations*

A delimitation of this study is that participants were confined to participants in the Nebraska Human Resources Institute at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln who graduated from college between 2007 and 2014.

### *Limitations*

By utilizing independent samples t-tests to analyze the questionnaire data, the analysis does not account for potential interrelatedness between independent variables, which could influence the complete picture of factors that impact community choice for NHRI alumni. Future studies would be apt to utilize analysis of variance or regression analyses to account for the potential interrelatedness.



## CHAPTER III

### Methods

The purpose of this descriptive study was to identify factors influencing the migration decisions of college graduates who participated in the Nebraska Human Resources Institute (NHRI) while in college. The study sought to determine important factors in the migration decision of the population, as well as identify the most significant factors influencing the migration of the population. The population was comprised of 277 NHRI participants who graduated from a university with their bachelor's degree between 2007 and 2014. A survey was the preferred method of data collection because it was the most effective means of identifying attributes of a large population from a small group of individuals (Babbie, 1990; Fowler, 2002). The survey was cross-sectional, as participants completed the survey at one point in time during November and December, 2013.

The process of developing the questionnaire began by reviewing scholarly articles in the migration literature. Many of the studies conducted in economic journals utilized obscure variables that would not be commonly considered by an individual deciding to migrate (e.g., Quality of warm-water recreational fishing index) (Clark & Cosgrove, 1991). While these economic studies provided valuable insights into the general types of factors that influence migration, there were few studies that examined the migration of people who recently graduated from college with their bachelor's degree and were making decisions about their location immediately upon graduating from a university. Moreover, there were no studies investigating the migration of people who recently graduated from college with a bachelor's degree that tend to be more socially responsible

than peers, demonstrated by higher contributions of time and money to family and community (Rossi, 2001).

A migration study analyzing factors influencing migration in Nebraska's panhandle region (far western Nebraska) provided the best model for the study's questionnaire. The questionnaire balanced the need for a broad selection of independent variables influencing migration—prescribed by the migration literature—while communicating those variables in a way that was easy for participants to understand. This questionnaire, called the “Buffalo Commons” survey, with Buffalo Commons referring to Nebraska's Panhandle region, was conducted by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Department of Agricultural Economics, the University of Nebraska Rural Initiative, and the Center for Applied Rural Innovation at UNL (Burkhart-Kriesel & Cantrell, 2007). Approval to use the instrument was provided by Rebecca Vogt, survey specialist with the Center for Applied Rural Innovation (see Appendix B).

The questionnaire was modified to be appropriate for a study of 21-28 year old individuals, removing questions specific to married couples and owning a business, farm or ranch (see Appendix C for original questionnaire). The modified instrument, used for this study, was reviewed for construct validity by a panel of experts (see Appendix D). The panel of experts, keeping in mind the research questions the study intended to answer, assessed the questionnaire to ensure that each question connected to the purpose of the study. Therefore, the panel ensured the questionnaire's construct validity by confirming that the questions aligned with the purpose of the research project and could be mapped to specific research questions.

The researchers conducted a pilot test of the questionnaire to determine face and content validity. The web link to the pilot test was initially sent on September 12, 2013, and the final reminder to participate in the pilot test was sent on September 30, 2013. A web link to the questionnaire was sent to the active email accounts of 65 current undergraduate NHRI participants intending to graduate with their bachelor's degree in 2015. This population included 23 males and 42 females, and was selected because its proximity in age to the population of the study without using potential participants from the actual study. Moreover, the students in this population were conveniently located on campus and had updated emails that were accessible to the researchers. The pilot study yielded 11 complete responses, and the respondents had no suggestions for improving the questionnaire's clarity or purpose related to face or content validity.

The questionnaire contained 24 items, including migration- and community-based questions, factor ranking and demographic questions. Two of the three migration- and community-based questions were Likert-type items based on a five-point scale ranging from "Not at all Important" to "Extremely Important." The other migration-based question asked respondents to rank the top five factors influencing their decision to choose a community. Other questions asked participants for demographic information, such as their current location, year of graduation, the population of their pre-college community, and the college from which they graduated with their undergraduate degree (see Appendix E for a complete copy of the questionnaire).

The content area addressed in the questionnaire is related to factors influencing migration, including economic and non-economic factors. For example, a common economic variable that influences migration is a location that has a job providing higher

income, while a common non-economic variable that influences migration is proximity to family and relatives. The majority of the factors that were used in the Buffalo Commons survey gave a holistic representation of the important economic and non-economic factors that are mentioned in the migration literature. Moreover, the Buffalo Commons survey presented the economic and non-economic variables in a much more comprehensible format, making it easier to complete as a participant. Additionally, since the majority of the migration literature studied populations exclusive to the Baby Boomer generation (individuals born between 1946 and 1964) and Generation X (individuals born between 1965 and 1984), independent variables related to this study's population—the Millennial Generation—were added to the questionnaire (Masnick, 2012).

The population for this study included 277 NHRI participants who graduated from a Midwestern university with their bachelor's degree between 2007 and 2014. The Nebraska Human Resources Institute (NHRI) is a leadership development program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. NHRI was founded in 1949 by Dr. William E. Hall and Dr. Donald O. Clifton—pioneers of the study of positive psychology. In NHRI, college students are selected for the program based on a demonstration of significant “human relations capital,” meaning they have a high capacity for positively influencing the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of others. This demonstration of significant “human relations capital” is based on a qualitative interview that measures the interviewee's sense of mission, empathy, rapport drive, listening, individual perception, investment, position, activation, gestalt, focus, work ethic, acceptance, and diversity.

These outstanding college students are paired in a one-to-one relationship with identified first grade through twelfth grade leaders in the Lincoln, Nebraska area who

also demonstrate significant “human relations capital.” The purpose of the relationship is for the college mentor, called “counselor,” to identify and develop the strengths of the younger leader, called “junior counselor,” ultimately teaching the junior counselor to identify and develop the strengths of others. Ideally, this creates a ripple effect of strengths-based relationships, with the junior counselors becoming a mentor for others, who will become mentors for others, etc. Currently, there are 180 college students participating in NHRI who are paired with 180 first through twelfth grade leaders in Lincoln, Nebraska.

The study considered and balanced two factors in limiting the age range of the population. First, NHRI has more accurate contact information for recent graduates, meaning there was a greater likelihood of a participant responding if the individual had more recently graduated from college with his or her bachelor’s degree. The researchers determined that 2007 was the earliest year of participant graduation that provided quality contact information. Second, the study began with a focus on the factors influencing migration of recent graduates. As the age of the potential participants increased, the less the population reflected the intended focus of the study. Thus, choosing a population of NHRI participants that graduated from college with their bachelor’s degree between 2007 and 2014 struck an appropriate balance between gaining a sufficient population size to produce higher response rates, while limiting the size of the population to focus on more recent NHRI participants.

The population was comprised of 122 males (44%) and 155 females (56%) who voluntarily participated in NHRI during their college career, serving as counselors. The ages of the population ranged from 21 to 28 years old, and each individual graduated or

will graduate from a Midwestern university between 2007 and 2014. Although this questionnaire utilized elements of previous instruments, it was modified to the extent that it represented a new survey instrument. This did not allow the researchers to calculate the variance attributed to each variable. As a result, calculating a desired sample size using a power analysis was not possible. Additionally, the researchers desired the highest sample size possible, but were constrained by the scope of the study's population (i.e., exclusively NHRI participants), which placed upper limits on the size of the sample. Therefore, the researchers sent the survey to the entire NHRI population graduating between 2007 and 2014 in hopes of receiving the highest sample size possible.

Every individual in the population was given an opportunity to complete the survey; some participants completed the survey in person while others completed the survey online. NHRI participants graduating from college in 2014 had the opportunity to complete the paper-and-pencil survey that was distributed at a weekly meeting of NHRI Counselors. At these weekly meetings, counselors discuss recent interactions with their junior counselors, while building relationships with other counselors. NHRI participants graduating from college in 2014 had the opportunity to complete the questionnaire at their weekly meeting between November 11, 2013 and November 20, 2013. The questionnaire was administered by a research assistant in order to reduce a sense of coercion of the current NHRI members, since two of the researchers held positions of authority within the organization. The paper-and-pencil format was selected for the current students because NHRI, a tight-knit community, comprised of high achieving students, has a high degree of accountability and responsiveness among this group.

NHRI participants who graduated from college between 2007 and 2013 had the opportunity to complete the questionnaire through a Qualtrics.com<sup>®</sup> questionnaire (Qualtrics, Provo, UT). All participants received an informational email on November 26, 2013, one week before their opportunity to participate in the study. The message was sent to their email address listed in the NHRI alumni database. On December 3, 2013, this same group received a web link to the online questionnaire.

Facebook<sup>®</sup> is a strong tool for connection in the NHRI community, with the NHRI Facebook<sup>®</sup> group totaling over 500 members, comprised of current members and alumni. Thus, Facebook<sup>®</sup> became a legitimate avenue for contacting individuals. If any email message was returned to the researchers due to an invalid or inactive email address, that individual was sent the web link to the study via a private Facebook<sup>®</sup> message. The researchers sent separate batches of Facebook<sup>®</sup> messages with web links to the study on December 3, 2013 and December 12, 2013. To improve response rates, all online participants received a follow-up email or Facebook<sup>®</sup> message and web link to the survey two weeks after receiving the initial link to the survey. This research protocol received approval by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Institutional Review Board governing research on human subjects. Formal approval can be found in Appendix F.

The data were collected utilizing a Qualtrics.com<sup>®</sup> survey. The researchers manually entered the paper-and-pencil results from the 30 completed surveys administered in person to current NHRI participants. The data from all participants, both in person and online, were exported from Qualtrics.com<sup>®</sup> on January 7, 2014 and analyzed using SPSS<sup>®</sup>. The data were analyzed in SPSS<sup>®</sup> using descriptive statistics and independent samples t-tests. Independent samples t-tests were utilized to identify

statistically significant differences between the mean responses of participants. To control for the equality of variance between participants currently living in Nebraska and participants currently living outside of Nebraska, Levene's test for equality of variance was used. When the p-value for Levene's test was  $<0.05$ , the two-tailed significance was calculated on unequal variance between the two groups (Ramsey & Schafer, 1997). Moreover, descriptive statistics were represented by the mean, frequency, and standard deviation, helping the researchers to compare and analyze responses.



## Chapter IV

### Data Analysis Results

#### **Purpose and Research Questions**

The purpose of this descriptive study was to identify factors influencing the migration decisions of college graduates who participated in NHRI while in college. The data analysis was used to answer the following research questions:

1. What factors are most important in the migration decisions of NHRI alumni?
2. Which factors are most important for NHRI alumni who chose to live either in Nebraska or outside of Nebraska?
3. Which factors are statistically significant determining the likelihood of in-state or out-of-state migration for NHRI alumni?

#### **Participant Information**

Of the 277 NHRI alumni included in the population (44% males, 56% females), 126 participants fully completed the questionnaire. With regard to gender, there were more female participants (58%) than male participants (42%). Fifty-four percent of participants currently live in Nebraska, while 46% of participants currently live outside of Nebraska. With regard to pre-college community, 83% of participants lived in Nebraska before attending college compared to 17% of participants who lived outside of Nebraska before attending college. Concerning age, 51% of participants were 20-23 years old, while 49% of participants were 24-28 years old. Considering the race/ethnicity of participants, 93% of participants were White, while three percent were Spanish/Hispanic/Latino, two percent were Asian or Pacific Islander, and two percent

were Other. More of the participants were unmarried (78%) as opposed to married (22%). Most participants did not have any children (93%).

## Data Results

For ease of presentation and understanding the rating scale used in survey question one and survey question three, this analysis will apply descriptive terms for ratings over a given range of values related to the Likert-type scale in each question. The range for each description is the following:

- 0.00 to 1.49 = Not at all Important
- 1.50 to 2.49 = Very Unimportant
- 2.50 to 3.49 = Neither Important nor Unimportant
- 3.50 to 4.49 = Very Important
- 4.50 to 5.00 = Extremely Important

To identify the factors that are most important to NHRI alumni, descriptive statistics were collected from question one, which asked NHRI alumni to rate the importance of 27 factors potentially affecting their migration decision (see Table 4.1). The top five most important factors according to mean were *to obtain a job where I can make a difference* ( $M = 4.54$ ,  $SD = 0.67$ ), *to obtain a job with a nurturing and social work environment* ( $M = 4.12$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ), *to obtain a job with opportunities for advancement* ( $M = 4.12$ ,  $SD = 4.12$ ), *to obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance* ( $M = 4.10$ ,  $SD = 1.02$ ), and *this community shares my attitudes/values* ( $M = 3.67$ ,  $SD = 1.07$ ). Thus, only *to obtain a job where I can make a difference* was Extremely

Important, while seven factors were considered Very Important based on mean rating of importance.

Table 4.1

*Importance of factors influencing migration for entire population of NHRI alumni*

Factors Influencing Migration	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
To obtain a job where I can make a difference	94	4.54	0.67
To obtain a job with a nurturing and social work environment	94	4.12	0.84
To obtain a job with opportunities for advancement	94	4.12	0.85
To obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance	94	4.10	1.02
This community shares my attitudes/values	94	3.67	1.07
To be closer to relatives	94	3.65	1.00
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	94	3.57	0.81
To obtain a graduate degree	94	3.54	1.42
To obtain a higher paying job	94	3.49	1.02
To find arts, entertainment, and cultural activities	94	3.44	0.99
To live in a desirable natural environment	94	3.18	1.03
To find more outdoor recreational activities	94	3.15	1.03
To obtain a job that allows me to pay off my student loans	94	3.10	1.40

*(Table 4.1 continues)*

*(Table 4.1 continued)*

Factors Influencing Migration	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
To find a safer place to live	94	3.09	1.28
To lower the cost of living	94	3.07	1.05
A better environment for raising children	94	3.01	1.36
To lower the cost of housing	94	2.86	1.15
To have more ethnic diversity	94	2.86	1.06
To find higher quality housing	94	2.82	1.03
To have a more desirable climate	94	2.79	0.99
To secure a better job for my spouse/partner	94	2.71	1.35
To find a simpler pace of life	94	2.66	1.15
To find a less congested place to live	94	2.56	1.18
To get more affordable health care	94	2.48	0.91
To have lower taxes	94	2.36	1.00
To have less ethnic diversity	94	1.85	0.84
To be farther from family and relatives	94	1.73	0.83

*Note.* Factors ranked on scale of 1 to 5, with ‘1’ being “Not at all Important”, ‘2’ being “Very Unimportant,” ‘3’ being “Neither Important nor Unimportant,” ‘4’ being “Very Important,” and ‘5’ being “Extremely Important.”

Responses from question one were assessed to identify the descriptive statistics associated with NHRI alumni who are currently living in Nebraska and NHRI alumni

who are currently living outside of Nebraska, in order to identify migration preferences associated with each living circumstance (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2

*Importance of factors influencing migration for NHRI alumni according to location of their current residence*

Factors	Living in Nebraska				Not living in Nebraska			
	n	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error Mean	n	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error Mean
To obtain a job where I can make a difference	49	4.59	0.61	0.09	45	4.42	0.75	0.11
To obtain a job with a nurturing and social work environment	49	4.20	0.84	0.12	44	3.98	0.95	0.14
To obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance	48	4.19	1.00	0.14	45	3.93	1.01	0.15
To obtain a job with opportunities for advancement	49	4.18	0.83	0.12	45	4.00	1.00	0.15
To be closer to relatives	49	3.94	0.90	0.13	45	3.22	0.97	0.15
This community shares my attitudes/values	49	3.92	0.95	0.14	44	3.32	1.07	0.16
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	49	3.86	0.74	0.11	45	3.20	0.76	0.11
To find a safer place to live	49	3.53	1.21	0.17	45	2.49	1.10	0.16
To find arts, entertainment, and cultural activities	49	3.53	0.96	0.14	45	3.33	1.00	0.15

*(Table 4.2 continues)*

(Table 4.2 continued)

Factors	Living in Nebraska				Not living in Nebraska			
	n	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error Mean	n	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error Mean
To obtain a higher paying job	49	3.51	0.94	0.13	45	3.47	1.22	0.18
A better environment for raising children	49	3.39	1.32	0.19	45	2.67	1.30	0.19
To obtain a graduate degree	49	3.33	1.52	0.22	45	3.67	1.38	0.21
To lower the cost of living	49	3.31	1.08	0.15	45	2.71	0.92	0.14
To live in a desirable natural environment	49	3.27	1.06	0.15	44	3.05	0.99	0.15
To lower the cost of housing	49	3.24	1.15	0.16	45	2.38	0.98	0.15
To find more outdoor recreational activities	49	3.18	0.99	0.14	45	3.13	1.06	0.16
To obtain a job that allows me to pay off my student loans	49	3.18	1.42	0.20	45	3.00	1.46	0.22
To find a simpler pace of life	49	2.98	1.20	0.17	45	2.24	1.03	0.15
To find higher quality housing	49	2.92	1.04	0.15	45	2.60	1.05	0.16

(Table 4.2 continues)

(Table 4.2 continued)

Factors	Living in Nebraska				Not living in Nebraska			
	n	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error Mean	n	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error Mean
To find a less congested place to live	49	2.88	1.24	0.18	45	2.20	1.12	0.17
To secure a better job for my spouse/partner	49	2.78	1.37	0.20	45	2.71	1.32	0.20
To have a more desirable climate	49	2.71	0.91	0.13	45	2.84	1.13	0.17
To have more ethnic diversity	49	2.65	0.97	0.14	45	2.96	1.19	0.18
To have lower taxes	49	2.63	1.07	0.15	44	2.05	0.91	0.14
To get more affordable health care	49	2.59	0.93	0.13	45	2.27	0.91	0.14
To have less ethnic diversity	49	2.00	0.82	0.12	45	1.69	0.85	0.13
To be farther from family and relatives	49	1.65	0.78	0.11	45	1.80	0.84	0.13

*Note.* Factors ranked on scale of 1 to 5, with ‘1’ being “Not at all important”, ‘2’ being “Very Unimportant,” ‘3’ being “Neither Important nor Unimportant,” ‘4’ being “Very Important,” and ‘5’ being “Extremely Important.”



The top five most important factors according to mean for NHRI alumni currently living in Nebraska were *to obtain a job where I can make a difference* ( $M = 4.59$ ), *to obtain a job with a nurturing and social work environment* ( $M = 4.20$ ), *to obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance* ( $M = 4.19$ ), *to obtain a job with opportunities for advancement* ( $M = 4.18$ ), and *to be closer to relatives* ( $M = 3.94$ ). NHRI alumni currently living in Nebraska considered *to obtain a job where I can make a difference* Extremely Important, while nine other factors were rated Very Important..

The top five most important factors according to mean for NHRI alumni currently living outside of Nebraska were *to obtain a job where I can make a difference* ( $M = 4.42$ ), *to obtain a job with opportunities for advancement* ( $M = 4.00$ ), *to obtain a job with a nurturing and social work environment* ( $M = 3.98$ ), *to obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance* ( $M = 3.93$ ), and *to obtain a graduate degree* ( $M = 3.67$ ). NHRI alumni not living in Nebraska did not rate any factors as Extremely Important, and rated five factors—all in the top five according to mean—as Very Important.

A statistical comparison for the tests between NHRI alumni living in Nebraska and NHRI alumni living outside of Nebraska was set a-priori using a two-tailed t-test at  $\alpha < 0.05$ . This was conducted for each statement comparing the importance of 27 migration factors for NHRI alumni. To control for the equality of variance between the Nebraska and Outside of Nebraska groups, Levene's test for equality of variance was used. When the p-value for Levene's test was  $< 0.05$ , the two-tailed significance was calculated on unequal variance between the two groups (Ramsey & Schafer, 1997).

Table 4.3 contains the statistically significant factors displayed as a result of an independent samples t-test, and Table 4.4 contains the Cohen's *d* calculations for effect size of the independent samples t-test (see Appendix G for full results of independent samples t-test).

Table 4.3

*Statistically significant community choice factors for NHRI graduates based on location of current residence*

Factors	Nebraska <i>M</i> (N=49)	Outside of Nebraska <i>M</i> (N=45)	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
To be closer to relatives	3.94	3.22	3.71	0.000*
This community shares my attitudes/values	3.92	3.32	2.86	0.005*
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	3.86	3.20	3.71	0.000*
To find a safer place to live	3.53	2.49	4.36	0.000*
A better environment for raising children	3.39	2.67	2.67	0.009*
To lower the cost of living	3.31	2.71	2.86	0.005*
To lower the cost of housing	3.24	2.38	3.92	0.000*
To find a simpler pace of life	2.98	2.24	3.18	0.002*
To find a less congested place to live	2.88	2.20	2.78	0.007*
To have lower taxes	2.63	2.05	2.82	0.006*

*Note.* \* $p < 0.05$ . Factors ranked on scale of 1 to 5, with '1' being "Not at all important", '2' being "Very Unimportant," '3' being "Neither Important nor Unimportant," '4' being "Very Important," and '5' being "Extremely Important." Significant factors are listed in descending order according to the mean score of participants currently living in Nebraska.

Table 4.3 illustrates factors that demonstrated a statistically significant difference between participants currently living in Nebraska and participants currently living outside of Nebraska. Participants currently living in Nebraska rated each statistically significant factor higher than participants currently living outside of Nebraska. Of the statistically significant factors, participants currently living in Nebraska rated four of those factors as Very Important: *to be closer to relatives, this community shares my attitudes/values, to be nearer friends and acquaintances*, and *to find a safer place to live*. Participants currently living outside of Nebraska rated none of the factors as Very Important or Extremely Important. The statistically significant factor with the largest difference between the means based on the participants' current state was *to find a safer place to live* (Nebraska  $M = 3.53$ , Not Nebraska  $M = 2.49$ ).

Table 4.4

*Effect size calculations for significant factors in NHRI alumni community choice utilizing Cohen's  $d$*

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Cohen's <math>d</math></b>	<b>Effect Size</b>
To find a safer place to live	0.90	Large
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	0.88	Large
To lower the cost of housing	0.80	Large
To be closer to relatives	0.77	Medium to Large
To find a simpler pace of life	0.66	Medium to Large
To lower the cost of living	0.60	Medium to Large
This community shares my attitudes/values	0.59	Medium to Large
To find a less congested place to live	0.58	Medium to Large
To have lower taxes	0.58	Medium to Large
A better environment for raising children	0.55	Medium to Large

*Note.* All factors in Table 4.4 are listed in order of greatest to smallest value according to Cohen's  $d$  calculation.

Table 4.4 displays the Cohen's  $d$  calculations for effect size from the independent samples t-test conducted to identify statistically significant community choice factors for NHRI alumni. All factors indicated at least a "Medium to Large" effect. The factors *to find a safer place to live*, *to be nearer friends and acquaintances*, and *to lower the cost of housing* displayed "Large" effect sizes.

To better understand the most important factors that influence the migration decisions of NHRI alumni, participants ranked their most influential factors on a scale of

1 to 5, with “1” being most important, “2” being second most important, etc. The top 10 factors, according to the percent of the sample that ranked a given factor in the top five, are displayed in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

*Percent of the entire sample that ranked a factor in the top five most important factors (N = 98)*

Rank	Factors	% in Top 5
1	To obtain a job where I can make a difference	0.72
2	To obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance	0.52
3	To be closer to relatives	0.46
4	To obtain a job with a nurturing and social work environment	0.42
5	This community shares my attitudes/values	0.41
6	To be nearer friends and acquaintances	0.40
7	To obtain a graduate degree	0.36
8	To find arts, entertainment, and cultural activities	0.26
9	To obtain a higher paying job	0.22
10	A better environment for raising children	0.17

*Note.* Participants ranked the five most important factors involved in choosing a community as a college graduate, with “1” being most important, “2” being second most important, etc.

Seventy-two percent of all participants ranked *to obtain a job where I can make a difference at work* as a top five factor influencing their choice of a community as a college graduate. The top five most commonly ranked factors influencing participants’

community choice are the following: *to obtain a job where I can make a difference, to obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance, to be closer to relatives, to obtain a job with a nurturing and social work environment, and this community shares my attitudes/values.*

To isolate the most important factors that influence whether NHRI alumni choose to live in Nebraska or live outside of Nebraska, percentages of the sample that ranked each factor in the top five were calculated based on participants' current state and appear in Table 4.6 and Table 4.7.

Table 4.6

*Percentage of participants currently living in Nebraska ranking factors in top five (N = 49)*

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Factors</b>	<b>% in Top 5</b>
<b>T1</b>	To obtain a job where I can make a difference	0.63
<b>T1</b>	To be closer to relatives	0.63
<b>T3</b>	To obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance	0.55
<b>T3</b>	To be nearer friends and acquaintances	0.55
<b>5</b>	This community shares my attitudes/values	0.45
<b>6</b>	To obtain a job with a nurturing and social work environment	0.43
<b>7</b>	To find arts, entertainment, and cultural activities	0.29
<b>8</b>	A better environment for raising children	0.27
<b>9</b>	To obtain a higher paying job	0.22
<b>10</b>	To obtain a graduate degree	0.20

*Note.* Participants ranked the five most important factors involved in choosing a community as a college graduate, with “1” being most important, “2” being second most important, etc.

Table 4.6 illustrates that over 50% of participants currently living in Nebraska ranked the following factors as influential factors in choosing a community: *to obtain a job where I can make a difference, to be closer to relatives, to obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance, and to be nearer friends and acquaintances.*

Table 4.7

*Percentage of participants currently living outside of Nebraska ranking factors in top five (N = 45)*

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Factors</b>	<b>% in Top 5</b>
<b>1</b>	To obtain a job where I can make a difference	0.80
<b>T2</b>	To obtain a graduate degree	0.53
<b>T2</b>	To obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance	0.53
<b>4</b>	To obtain a job with a nurturing and social work environment	0.40
<b>5</b>	This community shares my attitudes/values	0.31
<b>6</b>	To be closer to relatives	0.27
<b>7</b>	To find arts, entertainment, and cultural activities	0.24
<b>T8</b>	To be nearer friends and acquaintances	0.22
<b>T8</b>	To obtain a job that allows me to pay off my student loans	0.22
<b>T8</b>	To secure a better job for my spouse/partner	0.22
<b>T8</b>	To obtain a higher paying job	0.22

*Note.* Participants ranked the five most important factors involved in choosing a community as a college graduate, with “1” being most important, “2” being second most important, etc.

Table 4.7 illustrates that over 50% of participants living outside of Nebraska selected the following factors as a top five influential factor in choosing a community: *to obtain a job where I can make a difference, to obtain a graduate degree, and to obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance.*



Question three asked participants to rate the importance they placed on 29 different community and life factors, in order to identify key factors influencing in-state or out-of-state community choice among NHRI alumni. Descriptive statistics were calculated for question three according to the participants' current state and appear in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8

*Importance placed on community and life factors by NHRI alumni based on location of current residence*

Factors	Living in Nebraska				Not Living in Nebraska			
	n	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error Mean	n	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error Mean
Work-life balance	68	4.32	0.80	0.10	51	4.22	0.76	0.11
Feeling of "belonging" in the community	68	4.25	0.66	0.08	51	3.88	0.68	0.10
Available job opportunities	68	4.24	0.69	0.08	51	4.27	0.70	0.10
Leadership opportunities	68	4.19	0.82	0.10	51	4.02	0.84	0.12
Job security	68	4.16	0.75	0.09	51	4.14	0.69	0.10
Living near family and relatives	68	4.15	0.87	0.11	51	3.53	1.03	0.14
Suitable housing and neighborhoods	68	4.12	0.78	0.09	51	3.78	0.81	0.11
Affordable housing	67	4.07	0.64	0.08	51	3.73	0.83	0.12
Living near friends and acquaintances	68	4.07	0.82	0.10	51	3.65	0.98	0.14

*(Table 4.8 continues)*

*(Table 4.8 continued)*

Factors	Living in Nebraska				Not living in Nebraska			
	n	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error Mean	n	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error Mean
Educational opportunities	68	4.00	0.96	0.12	51	4.06	0.83	0.12
Standard of living	68	3.97	0.79	0.10	51	3.78	0.86	0.12
Opportunities to join local organizations	68	3.94	0.75	0.09	51	3.78	0.92	0.13
Clean environment	68	3.79	0.70	0.09	51	3.51	0.81	0.11
Environment for children	68	3.79	1.17	0.14	51	3.25	1.41	0.20
School system	68	3.78	1.22	0.15	51	3.35	1.28	0.18
Entertainment	68	3.75	0.78	0.09	51	3.53	0.99	0.14
Cellular phone service	68	3.68	0.97	0.12	51	3.33	1.09	0.15
Crime rate	68	3.66	1.07	0.13	51	3.76	0.86	0.12
Health care services	68	3.66	0.99	0.12	50	3.30	0.97	0.14

*(Table 4.8 continues)*

(Table 4.8 continued)

Factors	Living in Nebraska				Not living in Nebraska			
	n	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error Mean	n	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error Mean
Household income	68	3.65	0.86	0.10	51	3.39	0.92	0.13
Community appearance	68	3.63	0.77	0.09	51	3.33	0.82	0.11
Police protection	68	3.59	0.92	0.11	51	3.29	0.97	0.14
Internet services	68	3.59	1.01	0.12	51	3.41	1.08	0.15
Fire protection	68	3.53	0.95	0.12	51	3.25	1.00	0.14
Natural, scenic, or recreational amenities	68	3.46	0.82	0.10	51	3.49	0.78	0.11
Local government	68	3.15	0.98	0.12	51	2.76	0.91	0.13
Retail shopping	68	2.91	0.89	0.11	51	2.63	1.08	0.15
State taxes	68	2.71	0.92	0.11	51	2.41	1.04	0.15
Property and other local taxes	68	2.69	0.92	0.11	51	2.35	1.07	0.15

*Note.* Factors ranked on scale of 1 to 5, with ‘1’ being “Not at all important”, ‘2’ being “Very Unimportant,” ‘3’ being “Neither Important nor Unimportant,” ‘4’ being “Very Important,” and ‘5’ being “Extremely Important.” Factors are listed in order of highest to lowest mean for participants living currently living in Nebraska. ⌚

The top five community and life factors for NHRI alumni living in Nebraska were:

- *Work-life balance*
- *Feeling of “belonging” in the community*
- *Available job opportunities*
- *Leadership opportunities*
- *Job security*

The top five community and life factors for NHRI alumni not living in Nebraska were:

- *Available job opportunities*
- *Work-life balance*
- *Job security*
- *Educational opportunities*
- *Leadership opportunities*

Participants living in Nebraska rated all factors higher than participants living outside of Nebraska except for *available job opportunities*, *educational opportunities*, *crime rate*, and *natural, scenic, or recreational amenities*. The factors *environment for children* and *school system* were the two highest in standard deviation for both participants living in Nebraska and participants living outside of Nebraska. NHRI alumni living in Nebraska rated 24 of the 29 factors as Very Important, while NHRI alumni living outside of Nebraska rated 15 of the 29 factors as Very Important. NHRI alumni living in Nebraska rated zero factors as Very Unimportant or lower, and NHRI alumni

living outside of Nebraska rated two factors as Very Unimportant: *state taxes* and *property and other local taxes*.

Table 4.9 compares the top community and life factors according to mean for both participants currently living in Nebraska and participants currently living outside of Nebraska.

Table 4.9

*Top five community and life factors for NHRI alumni according to current location of residence*

Nebraska (N=68)			Not Nebraska (N=51)		
Rank	Factors	Mean	Rank	Factors	Mean
1	Work-life balance	4.32	1	Available job opportunities	4.27
2	Feeling of "belonging" in the community	4.25	2	Work-life balance	4.22
3	Available job opportunities	4.24	3	Job security	4.14
4	Leadership opportunities	4.19	4	Educational opportunities	4.06
5	Job security	4.16	5	Leadership opportunities	4.02

*Note.* Factors ranked on scale of 1 to 5, with '1' being "Not at all important", '2' being "Very Unimportant," '3' being "Neither Important nor Unimportant," '4' being "Very Important," and '5' being "Extremely Important."

A statistical comparison for the tests between the participants currently living in Nebraska and participants currently living outside of Nebraska was set a-priori using a two-tailed t-test at  $\alpha < 0.05$ . This was conducted for each statement comparing the importance of 29 community and life factors for NHRI alumni. To control for the equality of variance between the Nebraska and Outside of Nebraska groups, Levene's test for equality of variance was used. When the p-value for Levene's test was  $< 0.05$ , the two-tailed significance was calculated on unequal variance between the two groups (Ramsey

& Schafer, 1997). Statistically significant factors are displayed in Table 4.10, and independent samples t-test results for all factors are displayed in Appendix H. Moreover, effect size calculations utilizing Cohen's *d* for all statistically significant community and life factors are displayed in Table 4.11.

There were nine factors where the means of participants living in Nebraska significantly differed from participants living outside of Nebraska.

Table 4.10

*Mean importance of statistically significant community and life factors for NHRI alumni based on location of current residence*

Factors	Nebraska <i>M</i> (N=68)	Outside of Nebraska <i>M</i> (N=51)	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Feeling of "belonging" in the community	4.25	3.88	2.98	0.004*
Living near family and relatives	4.15	3.53	3.47	0.001*
Suitable housing and neighborhoods	4.12	3.78	2.27	0.025*
Affordable housing	4.07	3.73	2.51	0.014*
Living near friends and acquaintances	4.07	3.65	2.53	0.013*
Clean environment	3.79	3.51	2.05	0.043*
Environment for children	3.79	3.25	2.28	0.024*
Community appearance	3.63	3.33	2.04	0.043*
Local government	3.15	2.76	2.17	0.032*

*Note.* \* $p < 0.05$ . Factors ranked on scale of 1 to 5, with '1' being "Not at all important", '2' being "Very Unimportant," '3' being "Neither Important nor Unimportant," '4' being "Very Important," and '5' being "Extremely Important." Factors sorted in descending order for the column "Nebraska (*M*)."

Participants currently living in Nebraska rated each of the statistically significant community and life factors higher than participants currently living outside of Nebraska. The factor with the largest difference between the means for participants living in Nebraska and participants living outside Nebraska was *environment for children* (Nebraska  $M = 3.79$ , Not Nebraska  $M = 3.25$ ). *Environment for children* was the factor with the highest standard deviation for both groups of participants (Nebraska  $SD = 1.17$ , Not Nebraska  $SD = 1.41$ ). Each statistically significant factor was rated as Neither Important nor Unimportant or Very Important.



Table 4.11

*Effect size calculations for statistically significant community and life factors for NHRI alumni utilizing Cohen's  $d$*

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Cohen's <math>d</math></b>	<b>Effect Size</b>
Living near family and relatives	0.65	Medium to Large
Feeling of "belonging" in the community	0.55	Medium to Large
Affordable housing	0.46	Small to Medium
Living near friends and acquaintances	0.46	Small to Medium
Suitable housing and neighborhoods	0.42	Small to Medium
Environment for children	0.42	Small to Medium
Local government	0.41	Small to Medium
Community appearance	0.38	Small to Medium
Clean environment	0.37	Small to Medium

*Note.* All factors in Table 4.11 are listed in order of greatest to smallest according to Cohen's  $d$  calculations.

Table 4.11 indicates that all statistically significant community and life factors for NHRI alumni had at least a ‘Small to Medium’ effect. Two factors—*Living near family and relatives* and *Feeling of “belonging” in the community*—displayed a “Medium to Large” effect.

## Chapter V

### Conclusion

#### **Discussion**

The purpose of this descriptive study was to identify factors influencing the migration decisions of college graduates who participated in the Nebraska Human Resources Institute (NHRI) while in college. The analysis of results compared the ratings of migration, community, and life factors for NHRI alumni to answer the following research questions:

1. What factors are most important in the migration decisions of NHRI alumni?
2. Which factors are most important for NHRI alumni who chose to live either in Nebraska or live outside of Nebraska?
3. Which factors are statistically significant in determining the likelihood of in-state or out-of-state migration for NHRI alumni?

Data were collected via in person and online questionnaires. Independent samples t-test, rankings, and descriptive statistics results indicated that college graduates who mentored in NHRI rate career factors as the most important in their decision to choose a community. While both NHRI alumni who live in Nebraska and NHRI alumni who live outside of Nebraska rate career factors as most important in their decision to choose a community, those that live in Nebraska placed a higher importance on living near friends and family in comfortable, child-friendly communities with low costs of living. Beyond career factors, NHRI alumni living outside of Nebraska placed greater importance on graduate school opportunities than NHRI alumni living in Nebraska.

**Research Question One: What factors are most important in the migration decisions of NHRI alumni?**

The most important factors influencing the migration decisions of NHRI alumni were employment-related. Specifically, the opportunity to obtain a job where they can make a difference was the only factor with an Extremely Important mean rating and was ranked as the migration factor most commonly appearing in the sample's top five factors influencing migration. Additionally, results of all three survey questions indicated that work-life balance is a factor of high importance to NHRI alumni when migrating and choosing a community.

The top four factors in choosing a community as a college graduate according to mean rating of importance were all career-related: *to obtain a job where I can make a difference*, *to obtain a job with a nurturing and social work environment*, *to obtain a job with opportunities for advancement*, and *to obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance*. These top four factors reinforced findings from Ng et al. (2010) and Hauw and Vos (2010) indicating that millennials place high importance on factors such as career advancement, work-life balance, social connections at work, and personally fulfilling work. However, the current study's findings did not support early migration theories attributing much of migration to economic opportunity variables such as income. The factor *to obtain a higher paying job* was only the ninth highest rated factor of 27, though millennials have been shown to differ from previous generations (Twenge et al., 2010). Based on these results it is concluded that NHRI alumni are primarily career-oriented in their decision to choose a community after graduating from college.

The second survey question asked participants to rank their top five factors of the list of 27 factors used in the first survey question. Due to the high number of factors evaluated in survey question one, survey question two sought to identify the key factors that had the greatest impact on the participants' decision to choose communities as college graduates. Results from survey question two indicated that obtaining a job where one can make a difference at work was the factor most frequently listed as a top five factor by a wide margin (72.5% of the entire sample). The next most important factors were *to obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance* (52%), *to be closer to relatives* (45.9%), *to obtain a job with a social and nurturing work environment* (41.8%), and *this community shares my attitudes/values* (40.8%).

Since nearly three quarters of participants ranked *to obtain a job where I can make a difference* as a top five influential factor in their community choice, and since it was also the only factor rated Extremely Important, it can be concluded that NHRI alumni intend to make a difference in their chosen career fields. Moreover, NHRI alumni consistently ranked and rated *to obtain a job where I can make a difference* above extrinsic motivating factors like *to obtain a higher paying job*, indicating that NHRI alumni are more intrinsically motivated to enact positive change in their given careers.

As participants had to prioritize the most important factors from the initial list of 27 factors, three of the top five factors were career-related, one was family-related, and another was community-related. While most participants rated career-related factors as highest in question one, when forced to rank the top factors that would influence migration in question two, family and community entered the top factors.

It can be concluded that since this population is generative in nature according to Hastings' study (2012), they feel strongly about their commitment to family and community. This concurs with Rossi's (2001) findings that generativity is the highest predictor of social responsibility, which involves a greater commitment to family and community. Moreover, it can be concluded that individuals who have recently spent four years focusing on an education leading to a career would allow career variables to be highly influential in their decision to choose a community. Because previous migration literature never truly explored the Millennial Generation in its analyses, and because research on millennials is more related to career expectations than determinants of migration, the current study marks one of the first findings related to the migration of millennials. Furthermore, it is perhaps the first migration study of generative individuals within the Millennial Generation.

**Research Question Two: Which factors are most important for NHRI alumni who chose to live either in Nebraska or outside of Nebraska?**

The most important factors for NHRI alumni who chose to live in Nebraska were related to career, family/friends, and community. While the top four factors according to mean importance rating for NHRI alumni living in Nebraska were all career-related, the next three most important factors related to family, friends, and community. When NHRI alumni living in Nebraska were asked to rank the top five of the 27 migration factors according to importance in survey question two, the factors with the highest percent ranking in the top five were *to obtain a job where I can make a difference* and *to be closer to relatives* (tied at 63.3%), *to obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life*

*balance and to be nearer friends and acquaintances* (tied at 55.1%), and *this community shares my attitudes/values* (44.9%).

Results from the ranking of factors influencing community choice for NHRI alumni living in Nebraska indicate that while career-related factors achieved higher mean ratings, individuals who rated friends, family, and community highly in question one also included those variables in their top five factors in question two. One may conclude from this finding that NHRI alumni living in Nebraska after graduation tend to have high “psychic” costs of moving, defined as the reluctance to leave familiar surroundings, family, and friends located in a particular area (Sjaastad, 1962, p. 85).

The most important factors for NHRI alumni choosing to live outside of Nebraska were also career-related: *to obtain a job where I can make a difference, to obtain a job with a nurturing and social work environment, to obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance, to obtain a job with opportunities for advancement, and to obtain a graduate degree*. All of the aforementioned factors were the only factors labeled Very Important to NHRI alumni living outside of Nebraska. It is concluded from this finding that NHRI alumni choosing to live outside of Nebraska place higher importance on *what* they are doing instead of *where* they are doing it, specifically regarding proximity to family, friends, and familiar communities. Moreover, because of the high-achieving nature of NHRI alumni, they may perceive limited opportunities to pursue prestigious graduate degree opportunities in Nebraska as compared to opportunities to attend higher profile, more prestigious schools on the east (Ivy League) or west (Stanford) coasts.

When NHRI alumni living outside of Nebraska ranked the top five of the 27 migration factors according to importance in survey question two, *to obtain a job where I can make a difference* was the most important by a wide margin (80% of entire sample ranked it in the top five), with *to obtain a graduate degree* and *to obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance* tied for second most important (53.3%), and *to obtain a job with a social and nurturing work environment* (40%) being the four factors with over 40% of the group ranking them in the top five migration factors. These results appear to support the findings of Ng et al. (2010) that millennials have unrealistic expectations of quick career development and advancement, while simultaneously protecting a healthy work-life balance. NHRI alumni living outside of Nebraska still place a high value on work-life balance despite valuing other time intensive career variables, possibly confirming Ng et al.'s (2010) findings that millennials have unrealistic career expectations.

Thus, even after identifying the top-rated factors according to mean importance influencing community choice for NHRI alumni living outside of Nebraska, the top ranked factors continued to be career-related. This contrasts the top ranked factors for NHRI alumni living in Nebraska, because NHRI alumni living outside of Nebraska reiterated their mean ratings and ranked career-related factors as most important. However, NHRI alumni living in Nebraska placed higher ranking on family, friends, and community after having career-related factors dominate the mean ratings. This data further supports the aforementioned conclusion that NHRI alumni choosing to live in Nebraska may have higher psychic costs associated with moving outside of Nebraska, and thus, prefer to stay near friends, family, and community.

When comparing the percentages of factors that participants living in Nebraska and participants living outside of Nebraska ranked in the top five, five factors indicated a sizable difference in ranking importance:

1. *To obtain a job where I can make a difference*: Nebraska (63%) vs. outside of Nebraska (80%)

Anecdotally, many students perceive that the most prestigious opportunities to make a difference after college involve leaving the state of Nebraska (i.e., *Teach for America*, *Peace Corps*, etc.). For high achieving students, such as those who have participated in NHRI during college, it makes sense that they would seek these “top” opportunities and leave the state. Support for this anecdote is found in the variable *to obtain a higher paying job*, which was rated Neither Important nor Unimportant by NHRI alumni living outside Nebraska. *Teach for America* and the *Peace Corps* are not high paying opportunities, and thus, could indicate that NHRI alumni are leaving the state to make a difference in these types of situations.

Moreover, since *to obtain a job where I can make a difference* was ranked highest by both NHRI alumni living in Nebraska and NHRI alumni living outside of Nebraska, it can be concluded that NHRI alumni are most motivated to choose a community based on the opportunity to make a difference at work. Since most NHRI alumni successfully take a university-level training course on making a difference in the lives of others while earning their bachelor’s degree, it follows that they strongly value and consider their potential to make a difference in their future community.

2. *To obtain a graduate degree*: Nebraska (20%) vs. outside of Nebraska (53%)



Students may perceive limited opportunities for graduate degrees in the state of Nebraska. If students perceive that there are greater and more prestigious opportunities for graduate education outside the state of Nebraska that could explain the difference between these two groups and their response to the survey question.

3. *To be closer to relatives*: Nebraska (63%) vs. outside of Nebraska (27%)

Since 83% of the population lived in Nebraska before attending college, it makes sense that a higher percentage of those currently living in Nebraska value living near relatives. Despite a large majority of participants indicating that Nebraska was their pre-college home state, only 54% of the population indicated that their current state of residence is Nebraska. Thus, a substantial part of the pre-college Nebraska population chose to migrate outside the state, raising interesting questions for that sub-group regarding their reasons for out-migrating.

Did they feel a need to “branch out” from the familiar in order to experience the “unknown”? Did they leave with the intention of returning to Nebraska later in life to start a family? Results from the rankings indicate that the two primary reasons a participant moved out of Nebraska were *to obtain a job where I can make a difference* and *to obtain a graduate degree*. If those two factors are indeed the most influential in this out-migration shift from living in Nebraska to living outside of Nebraska, what about those factors is more appealing when pursuing them outside of Nebraska?

4. *To be nearer friends and acquaintances*: Nebraska (55%) vs. outside of Nebraska (22%)

An important consideration for this finding is determining if participants are choosing to move closer to friends from out-of-state, friends from high school, or friends from college. Anecdotally, it makes sense to see proximity to family ranked higher than proximity to friends, though they are closely related. One could reasonably conclude that NHRI alumni choosing to live in Nebraska value their relationships with friends more than NHRI alumni choosing to live outside of Nebraska.

5. *This community shares my attitudes/values*: Nebraska (45%) vs. outside of Nebraska (31%)

This finding indicates the importance NHRI alumni living in Nebraska place on comfortable, familiar communities as opposed to different or unknown communities. Anecdotally, many college students choose to live in unknown places after college for the adventure, whether in a big city or different country. Perhaps this finding indicates that NHRI alumni living in Nebraska are choosing a known, stable, familiar environment as opposed to the adventurous unknown chosen by NHRI alumni living outside of Nebraska.

Overall, while NHRI alumni as a whole prefer career-related factors when choosing a community, NHRI alumni living in Nebraska prefer proximity to family and friends, as well as comfortable communities, as more important than those living outside of Nebraska, who tend to leave Nebraska to make a difference at work and pursue a graduate degree.

**Research Question Three: Which factors are statistically significant in determining the likelihood of in-state or out-of-state migration for NHRI alumni?**

Results from the two independent samples t-tests conducted in survey questions one and three indicated that there are three categories of migration and community/life factors that distinguish NHRI alumni who chose to live in Nebraska versus NHRI alumni who chose live outside of Nebraska: *Familiar people*, *Comfortable communities*, and *Low costs*. The two Cohen's *d* effect size tests indicated that all factors had at least a "Small to Medium" effect. Moreover, at least one factor from each of the three categories indicated a "Large" effect size. Additionally, every significant factor in each independent samples t-test was rated higher by NHRI alumni living in Nebraska.

The following is a breakdown of statistically significant factors according to the aforementioned category and listed in each category in order of mean importance rating from survey question one, which asked participants to rate the importance of 27 factors in their decision to choose a community as a college graduate:

- Familiar people: *to be closer to relatives, to be nearer friends and acquaintances*
- Comfortable communities: *this community shares my attitudes/values, to find a safer place to live, a better environment for raising children, to find a simpler pace of life, to find a less congested place to live*
- Low costs: *to lower the cost of living, to lower the cost of housing, to have lower taxes*

This marked the first time cost of living enters the conversation of important migration factors to consider, indicating that cost of living is more important to NHRI alumni living in Nebraska than those choosing to live outside of Nebraska. This also reveals the perception that those living in Nebraska believe that living outside of Nebraska is more

expensive. Moreover, these findings reiterated the importance of familiar people and familiar places to NHRI alumni living in Nebraska.

While survey question one assessed migration factors, survey question three addressed current community and life preferences of NHRI alumni. The following is a categorical breakdown of statistically significant factors listed in order of mean rating of importance from survey question three, which asked participants to rate the importance of 29 community and life factors:

- Familiar people: *living near family and relatives, living near friends and acquaintances*
- Comfortable communities: *feeling of “belonging” in the community, suitable housing and neighborhoods, clean environment, environment for children, community appearance, local government*
- Low costs: *affordable housing*

Findings from significant factors in question three reveal the first instance factors such as *suitable housing, a clean environment, community appearance, and local government* are mentioned as factors considered by NHRI alumni. In both survey questions one and three, the highest rated significant factors related to proximity to family and a sense of “belonging” and shared values in the community. While all factors were significant according to mean difference based on the NHRI alumni’s current state of residence, the low cost factors were generally the least important according to mean rating. The statistically significant factors that were most important according to mean rating were

*Familiar people*, with factors related to *Comfortable communities* (e.g., shared attitudes/values and feeling of “belonging”) also being rated highly.

Thus, while the categories of *Familiar people*, *Comfortable communities*, and *Low costs* are all factors that distinguish NHRI alumni who live in Nebraska from NHRI alumni that do not live in Nebraska, the more influential factors relate mainly to *Familiar people* and *Comfortable communities*.

### **Recommendations for Further Study**

A motivating factor of this study was to understand students graduating from college who think and act as “community builders” when choosing their living community after college. In an effort to attract and retain more community builders in Nebraska, it would be valuable to investigate the perceptions of the two top-ranked factors influencing community choice for NHRI alumni living outside of Nebraska: *to obtain a job where I make a difference* and *to obtain a graduate degree* opportunities. Are there particular graduate school opportunities not offered in Nebraska that are forcing Nebraska’s college graduates to pursue opportunities elsewhere? Is it related more to the *quality* of graduate programs in Nebraska? Do Nebraska’s college graduates perceive working in Nebraska as less meaningful? Do Nebraska’s college graduates feel the need to move to popularized regions of the country and world (i.e., developing countries or inner city metro areas) in order to feel like they are making a difference? What is the likelihood that a community builder who moves out of Nebraska after graduating college decides to move back later in life? What factors influence that decision?

Although gender was not intended to be part of the study and was not specifically examined, a final analysis was run on gender, which indicated that females placed significantly higher importance than males for the following community and life factors from survey question three: *clean environment, crime rate, police protection, fire protection, health care services, school system, living near family and relatives, retail shopping, cellular phone service, local government, and community appearance*. This raises intriguing questions for further analysis concerning the community preferences of female NHRI alumni when making decisions about starting a career and/or family. It is recommended that further study examine the role of perceived *community safety* and *meeting family needs* on the preferences of male and female NHRI alumni when choosing where to live after college to determine if significant differences exist between genders.

While this study analyzed the differences between NHRI alumni living in Nebraska and NHRI alumni living outside of Nebraska, future research should consider other demographic variables that could explain more of the difference between groups, such as age, gender, socioeconomic status, and college degree. Taking these demographic analyses a step further, knowing how many individuals actually attended graduate school would be helpful in understanding determinants of migration for NHRI alumni, rather than simply knowing if it was important. Moreover, participants may have felt pressure to return home to a family-run business—an attractive, secure economic opportunity that could significantly impact a migration decision. Inquiry into such economic opportunities is recommended.

To better understand these factors identified as influential in a migration decision, qualitative or mixed methods could be effective, such as focus groups and interviews as

follow-up procedures to the initial survey. Additionally, there is a possibility that interactions between factors existed that weren't accounted for in this study. For example, the combination of *to obtain a job where I can make a difference* and *to obtain a graduate degree* could produce an even greater desire to move afar than the sum of their respective influence. Thus, utilizing two- or three-way analysis of variance would begin an inquiry into such possible interactions between factors.

### **Implications for Nebraska Communities**

The findings of this descriptive study could provide valuable insight to Nebraska communities in understanding generative college students who are most likely to invest in their future families and communities. For example, since *to obtain a job where I can make a difference* was by far the most important factor for NHRI alumni who moved out of Nebraska, a Nebraska community could better illustrate opportunities to make a difference working in that community. While more study is needed to fully understand how NHRI alumni perceive the difference they can make when they live in Nebraska or outside of Nebraska, possessing that enhanced understanding could help to highlight areas of interest for NHRI students who are graduating from college. Statewide marketing activities and local community efforts could develop intentional messaging campaigns to encourage students to make a difference in Nebraska, utilizing billboards, commercials, social media advertisements, etc. to communicate the message. Further strategic messaging could dispel popular myths about such things such as the cost of living in Nebraska is much lower compared to other states, and there are no prestigious graduate school opportunities in Nebraska.

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## APPENDIX A

## Negative and Positive Factors for Morgan Quitno Press' 2000 Most Livable State Award

1. Percent Change in Number of Crimes: 1997 to 1998
2. Crime Rate
3. State Prisoner Incarceration Rate
4. State Cost of Living Index
5. Pupil-Teacher Ratio in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools
6. Unemployment Rate
7. Percent of Nonfarm Employees in Government
8. Electricity Prices
9. Hazardous Waste Site on the National Priority List per 10,000 Square Miles
10. State & Local Taxes as a Percent of Personal Income
11. Per Capita State and Local Government Debt Outstanding
12. Percent of Population Not Covered by Health Insurance
13. Births of Low Birth weight as a Percent of All Births
14. Percent of Births to Teenage Mothers
15. Infant Mortality Rate
16. Age-Adjusted Death Rate by Suicide
17. Population per Square Mile
18. Divorce Rate
19. Poverty Rate

20. State and Local Government Spending for Welfare Programs as a Percent of All Spending

21. Percent of Households Receiving Food Stamps

22. Deficient Bridges as a Percent of Total Bridges

23. Highway Fatality Rate

24. Fatalities in Alcohol-Related Crashes as a Percent of All Highway Fatalities

25. Percent Change in Per Capita Gross State Product: 1993 to 1997

26. Per Capita Gross State Product

27. Per Capita Personal Income

28. Change in Per Capita Personal Income: 1997 to 1998

29. Median Household Income

30. Public High School Graduation Rate

31. Percent of Population Graduated from High School

32. Expenditures for Education as a Percent of All State and Local Government Expenditures

33. Percent of Population Graduated from College

34. Books in Public Libraries Per Capita

35. Per Capita State Art Agencies' Legislative Appropriations

36. Annual Average Weekly Earnings of Production Workers on Manufacturing Payrolls

37. Job Growth: 1998 to 1999

38. Normal Daily Mean Temperature

39. Percent of Days that are Sunny

- 40. Homeownership Rate
- 41. Domestic Migration of Population: 1998 to 1999
- 42. Marriage Rate
- 43. Percent of Eligible Population Reported Voting

## APPENDIX B

## Approval to Use Survey Instrument

*Email from Jack Ehrke to Rebecca Vogt on 7/16/13*

Becky,

My name is Jack Ehrke and I am a Graduate Assistant in the ALEC Department on East Campus. Randy Cantrell forwarded you an email correspondence from last month concerning the search for a questionnaire to use in my upcoming migration study on college graduates from the NHRI leadership development program at UNL.

When reading the *Newcomers to the Panhandle: How do we keep them here?* report from September 2007, the text provided a website for the survey questionnaire, but it is no longer in use. **Would I be able to get access to the questionnaire to help inform the creation of my questionnaire for the upcoming migration study?** I would give full credit to CARL and the authors of the instrument. If there are other instruments that were used in the study, access to them would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to hearing your response.

Have a great week!

---

Jack Ehrke  
ALEC Grad Asst

*Response from Rebecca Vogt to Jack Ehrke on 7/16/13*

Jack,

Here is the questionnaire we used for that study. If you have any other questions, please let me know.

Thanks,  
Becky

Becky Vogt  
Survey Research Manager  
UNL Department of Agricultural Economics  
111 W Court, Room 3  
Pierce NE 68767  
(402) 329-6251  
Rvogt2@unl.edu

## APPENDIX C

Buffalo Commons Study Questionnaire, Template for the Current Study Questionnaire



# NEW RESIDENTS SURVEY



Please return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope to:  
Center for Applied Rural Innovation  
111 W Court, Room 3 ● Pierce, NE 68767

## NEW RESIDENT INFORMATION

Q1. In what month and year did you move to your current community?

Month \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Q2. In what state and county did you live immediately before moving to your present community?

State: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Q3. How long did you live in your previous community?

\_\_\_\_\_ Years

Q4. At your previous location, did you own or rent your residence?

- 1 Owned
- 2 Rented
- 3 Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Q5. Did you make this move alone or did others move with you? *Check all that apply.*

- ☐ I moved alone
- ☐ I moved with a spouse/partner
- ☐ I moved with a child or children
- ☐ I moved with other related adults
- ☐ I moved with other unrelated adults

Q6. Have you and your spouse/partner (if you have one) ever lived in this state, county and community before? Circle "yes" or "no" for each person, if applicable.

	YOURSELF		SPOUSE/ PARTNER	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
a. Ever lived in current state?	Yes	No	Yes	No
b. Ever lived in current county?	Yes	No	Yes	No
c. Ever lived in or near current community?	Yes	No	Yes	No

Q7. How many times have you and your spouse/partner (if you have one) moved your primary residence since becoming an adult (age 18 or older)?

- a. As an adult, I have moved \_\_\_\_\_ times.
- b. As an adult, my spouse/partner has moved \_\_\_\_\_ times.

Q8. What job/occupational skills do you possess (even if you are not currently using them)? Read each and circle all that apply.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 Management, business and financial operations | 8 Sales and related                     |
| 2 Professional and related occupations          | 9 Office and administrative support     |
| 3 Healthcare support                            | 10 Construction and extraction          |
| 4 Protective services                           | 11 Installation, maintenance and repair |
| 5 Food preparation and serving                  | 12 Production                           |
| 6 Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance | 13 Transportation and materials moving  |
| 7 Personal care and services                    | 14 Agriculture                          |
|   | 15 Other (please specify): _____        |

Q9. In your previous community, did you own and operate a business, farm or ranch?

- 1 Yes, I owned and operated a farm or ranch and another type of business
- 2 Yes, I owned and operated only a farm or ranch
- 3 Yes, I owned and operated only a business and not a farm or ranch
- 4 No, I did not own and operate either

Q10. Do you currently own and operate a business, farm or ranch?

- 1 I own and operate a farm or ranch and another type of business
- 2 I own and operate only a farm or ranch
- 3 I own and operate only a business and not a farm or ranch
- 4 No, I do not own and operate either

Q11. Are you interested in starting a new, expanded or additional business in this community?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Don't know

Q12. Which of the following types of training in business development, management or entrepreneurship have you had? Circle all that apply.

- 1 College course(s)
- 2 Formal training course
- 3 Workshop
- 4 Conference
- 5 On the job training
- 6 Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 None of the above

Q13. For each of the following statements about businesses and business owners in your community, please indicate how much you agree or disagree.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. People are supportive of new businesses.	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
b. People look up to business entrepreneurs.	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
c. Leaders in this community are supportive of new business ventures.	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
d. Anyone interested in starting a business is treated fairly.	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5

Q14. Did you do any of the following items in your previous community? Have you done any of the following in your current community? Check all that apply for both your previous and current community.

	Previous Community	Current Community
a. Belonged to a community, church, school, civic, or any other type of group or organization in your local community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Volunteered your time for a community, church, school, civic or any other type of group or organization in your local community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Held a leadership role in a community, church, school, civic, or any other type of group or organization in your local community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Held public office or served on a government board or committee in your local community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Donated money to local community organizations, charities, or causes in your local community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## REASONS FOR MOVING

Q15. In your decision to leave your previous community, how important were each of the following reasons for leaving the community you listed in Question 2?

	Very Unimportant		Neither		Very Important
	▼		▼		▼
a. High cost of living	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
b. Fear of crime	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
c. Undesirable climate	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
d. Urban congestion	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
e. High state and/or local taxes	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
f. Lack of outdoor recreational opportunities	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
g. Long commute	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
h. Poor schools	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
i. High cost of operating business	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
j. Too close to relatives	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
k. Too far from relatives	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
l. Unsafe place to live	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
m. Quality of the natural environment	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
n. Few cultural opportunities	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
o. Lack of job opportunities	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
p. Lack of Internet access	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
q. Poor place to raise children	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
r. Lack of community pride	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
s. Community did not share my (our) values	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5
t. Other:	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....	5

Q16. In your decision to move to your current community, how important were each of the following factors involved for your household?

	Very Unimportant		Neither		Very Important				
a. To be closer to relatives	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
b. To be nearer friends and acquaintances	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
c. To be farther from family and relatives	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
d. To find available and affordable childcare	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
e. To find better quality local schools	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
f. A better environment for raising children	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
g. To find a less congested place to live	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
h. To find a safer place to live	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
i. To lower the cost of housing	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
j. To have lower taxes	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
k. To have better internet access	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
l. To live in a desirable natural environment	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
m. To find more outdoor recreational activities	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
n. To find arts, entertainment, cultural activities	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
o. To find a simpler pace of life	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
p. To have more ethnic diversity	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
q. To have less ethnic diversity	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
r. This community shares my (our) attitudes/ values	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
s. To lower the cost of living	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
t. To have a more desirable climate	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
u. To get more affordable health care	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
v. To find higher quality housing	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
w. To obtain a higher paying job	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
x. To obtain a job more in line with my skills	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
y. To secure a better job for my spouse/partner	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5
z. Other: _____	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	4	.....	5

Q17. Did any of the following job-related considerations influence your decision to move to your current community? Please circle "yes" or "no" for each item.

	YOURSELF		SPOUSE/ PARTNER	
a. A transfer by current employer (except military)	Yes	No	Yes	No
b. To look for new work/job	Yes	No	Yes	No
c. To accept employment by a new employer	Yes	No	Yes	No
d. To start/take over a business	Yes	No	Yes	No
e. A military transfer	Yes	No	Yes	No
f. Other work or job related factors: _____	Yes	No	Yes	No

Q18. At your current location, where is your residence located? Circle number and give name of community.

- 1 Inside the city limits of the city/town of \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 In a rural area on a farm. The nearest city/town is \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 In a rural area but not on a farm. The nearest city/town is \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Q19. In thinking about why you left the place you lived and moved to your current community, which one of the following best sums up why you moved? Circle one number.

- 1 I wanted to leave the place I was living
- 2 I wanted to move to the place I am now living
- 3 Both considerations were about the same
- 4 Neither of these reasons apply

### DECISION MAKING TOOLS USED

Q20. Did you obtain information from any of the following sources when making your decision to move to your current location? *Circle all that apply.*

- 1 Internet
- 2 TV, magazines, newspapers, business publications
- 3 Current community resident
- 4 Employer or co-workers
- 5 Friends and acquaintances
- 6 Family
- 7 Travel or vacation to new location
- 8 Attended school or college in new location
- 9 Recruitment information from community
- 10 Recruitment information from high school alumni association
- 11 Recruitment information from employer
- 12 Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Q21. Before choosing your current location, what other locations did you consider?

- 1 Only this location
- 2 Other locations in this same state
- 3 Other locations in other states
- 4 Other locations in both this state and other states
- 5 Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Q22. Had you ever been to your current community before moving here?

- 1 Yes (*Go on to Q23*)
- 2 No (*Skip to Q24*)

Q23. *If yes, which of the following describe your contact with this community before you moved here? Circle all that apply.*

- 1 Lived here previously
- 2 Vacationed in community or traveled through during vacation
- 3 Visited family that lived here
- 4 Visited community during work-related travel
- 5 Visited friends that lived here
- 6 Attended college here
- 7 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### YOUR CURRENT COMMUNITY

Q24. Listed below are several pairs of contrasting views regarding your community. For each pair please indicate which one of the two views you most agree with. *Circle the appropriate number on the line between each pair of items. 1 indicates your community is most like the item on the left, 4 is neutral and 7 indicates your community is most like the item on the right.*

My community is . . .

Unfriendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Friendly
Distrusting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Trusting
Hostile	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Supportive

Q25. How likely is it that you will be living in your current community five years from now? *Circle the number of your answer.*

Definitely not	Probably not	Don't know	Probably will	Definitely will
1	2	3	4	5



Q26. In thinking of your current community, how would you rate the following community and life factors now that you are living here?

	Excellent ▼	Good ▼	Fair ▼	Poor ▼
a. Suitable housing and neighborhoods	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
b. Affordable housing	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
c. Feeling of "belonging" in the community	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
d. State taxes	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
e. Property and other local taxes	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
f. Clean environment	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
g. Job security	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
h. Available job opportunities	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
i. Leadership opportunities	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
j. Opportunities to join local organizations	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
k. Crime rate	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
l. Senior living/services	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
m. Police protection	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
n. Fire protection	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
o. Health care services	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
p. School system	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
q. Living near family and relatives	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
r. Living near friends and acquaintances	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
s. Educational opportunities	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
t. Entertainment	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
u. Retail shopping	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
v. Internet services	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
w. Cellular phone services	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
x. Standard of living	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
y. Environment for children	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
z. Local government	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
aa. Natural, scenic or recreational amenities	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
bb. Community appearance	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
cc. Household income	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
dd. Other: _____	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....

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Q27. In your opinion, how long is a person a "newcomer" when they move to this community?

- 1 Less than 1 year
- 2 1 - 3 years
- 3 4 - 9 years
- 4 10 years or more

Q28. How strongly would you encourage or discourage the following groups of people to move to or remain in your current community?

	Have None ▼	Strongly Discourage ▼	Somewhat Discourage ▼	Somewhat Encourage ▼	Strongly Encourage ▼
a. Your children	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
b. Your grandchildren	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
c. Other relatives & in-laws		1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
d. Your close, personal friends		1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
e. Young adults/young families		1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
f. Elderly persons		1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
g. Out of state residents		1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
h. Nebraskans from other areas of the state		1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
i. Members of ethnic minorities		1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
j. Single parent households		1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....
k. Other: _____		1 .....	2 .....	3 .....	4 .....

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## DEMOGRAPHICS

Q29. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_ years

Q30. What is your gender?

- 1 Male  
2 Female

**Q31. What is your highest level of formal education?**

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade                        | 4 Some college, no degree         |
| 2 9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade (no diploma) | 5 Associate (two-year) degree     |
| 3 High school diploma<br>(or equivalency)                | 6 Bachelors (four-year) degree    |
|  | 7 Graduate or professional degree |

Q32. What was your approximate household income from all sources, before income taxes, for 2006? For those who are self-employed, please report your NET income after business expenses.

- |   |                     |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|---|---------------------|
| 1 | Less than \$10,000  | 5 | \$40,000 - \$49,999 |
| 2 | \$10,000 - \$19,999 | 6 | \$50,000 - \$59,999 |
| 3 | \$20,000 - \$29,999 | 7 | \$60,000 - \$74,999 |
| 4 | \$30,000 - \$39,999 | 8 | \$75,000 or more    |

**Q33. How many children and adults live in your home?**

number of adults in home

number of children in home

**Q34. Which racial or ethnic group do you most closely identify yourself with?**

- 1 White
- 2 Black/African American
- 3 American Indian/Alaska Native
- 4 Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
- 5 Asian or Pacific Islander
- 6 Other

**Q35. Was anyone in your household employed either on a full-time, part-time, or seasonal basis (including self-employment) at any time during 2006?**

- 1 Yes (Go on to Q36)
- 2 No (Skip to Q38)

Please answer each of the next two questions for yourself and your spouse or partner, if you have one.

Yourself	Your spouse/partner (if you have one)

Q36. How far do you or your spouse or partner normally travel, one way, to your regular job?

Job location varies .....	1	1
I work at home .....	2	2
I travel to work, one way .....	_____ miles	_____ miles
Not applicable .....	4	4

Q37. Listed below are several broad categories of occupations. Please circle the description that best describes your and your spouse/partner's (if you have one) primary occupation. Please circle only one number for each person.

	<div> <div> Yourself </div> </div>	<div> <div> Your spouse/partner (if you have one) </div> </div>
Management, business and financial operations	1	1
Professional and related occupations	2	2
Healthcare support	3	3
Protective services	4	4
Food preparation and serving	5	5
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	6	6
Personal care and services	7	7
Sales and related	8	8
Office and administrative support	9	9
Construction and extraction	10	10
Installation, maintenance and repair	11	11
Production	12	12
Transportation and materials moving	13	13
Agriculture	14	14
Other (please specify): _____	15	15

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your help in this effort is greatly appreciated. If you could give any additional advice to community and state leaders for improving the quality of life for people who have recently moved here, please feel free to note them below.

Thank you!

Q38. Do you have anything else you would like to share about your move?



## APPENDIX D

### List of Experts Involved in Construct Validity Determination

- Rebecca Vogt
  - Rebecca Vogt is a Survey Research Manager, UNL Department of Agricultural Economics, and played a key role in the development of the current study's survey instrument.
- Sue Bath, Ph.D.
  - Sue Bath is intimately familiar with the nature of Nebraska Human Resources Institute (NHRI) alumni as an NHRI Board Member, alum of NHRI, and her daughter's current involvement in NHRI.
- Lindsay Hastings, Ph.D.
  - Lindsay Hastings is an expert in the field of Generativity, as well as an expert in the nature of the NHRI alumni due to her role as NHRI Director and committee member to this Master's thesis.
- Tom Field, Ph.D.
  - Tom Field is an expert in Entrepreneurship and Community Development, and also serves as a committee member to this Master's thesis.
- Mark Balschweid, Ph.D.
  - Mark Balschweid is an expert in Agricultural Leadership and Education, and is the committee chair to this Master's thesis.

## APPENDIX E

## Questionnaire Utilized in Current Study

*Participant Informed Consent Form**Identifying Determinants of Post-College Migration for Participants in the Nebraska Human Resources Institute (NHRI)*

IRB # 13735

**Title:** Identifying Determinants of Post-College Migrations for NHRI Participants**Purpose:**

This research project will aim to identify factors that determine the post-college migration of students who participated in NHRI. You are invited to participate in this study because you participated in NHRI as a college student.

**Procedures:**

You will be asked to complete a questionnaire regarding your process of deciding where to live after you graduated from college. The questionnaire will last 15 minutes. You will receive a link to the online survey through your active email account as listed in the NHRI alumni database. After completing the informed consent document, you will be permitted to complete the survey.

**Benefits:**

There are no direct benefits to you as a research participant. Indirect benefits to participants and others includes: building stronger Nebraska communities through their increased understanding of the needs and desires of future community leaders, supporting NHRI's goals of attracting and retaining community leaders in Nebraska, and would provide more opportunities for the participants as Nebraska communities better understand the community needs and desires of the participants.

**Risks and/or Discomforts:**

There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

**Confidentiality:**

Any information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept strictly confidential. No identifying information will be collected. The data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the office of Dr. Mark Balschweid (301c Ag Hall) and the research team will have access to the data during the study and for two years after the study is complete. The information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but the data will be reported as aggregated data.

**Opportunity to Ask Questions:**

You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. Or you may contact the investigator(s) at the phone numbers or email addresses listed below. Please contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board at (402) 472-6965 to voice concerns about the research or if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant.

**Freedom to Withdraw:**

Participation in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or in any other way receive a penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

**Consent, Right to Receive a Copy:**

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Selecting “YES. I agree to participate in the study having read and understood the information presented.” certifies that you have decided to participate having read and understood the information presented. You will be emailed a copy of this consent form to keep.

**Name and Phone number of investigator(s)**

Jack Ehrke, Principal Investigator                      Cell: (507) 317-8501 Email: jack.ehrke@gmail.com

Mark Balschweid, Ph.D., Secondary Investigator   Office (402) 472-3477   Email: mbalschweid2@unl.edu

Lindsay Hastings, Ph.D., Secondary Investigator   Office (402) 472-8738   Email: lhastings2@unl.edu

**Do you agree to participate having read and understood the information presented?**

- ☐ YES. I agree to participate having read and understood the information presented.
- ☐ NO. I do not agree to participate having read and understood the information presented.

If Yes, I agree to the terms a... Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Block  
If No, I do not agree to the t... Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q1 When choosing a community as a college graduate, how important are (or were) the following factors in that decision?

	Not at all Important (1)	Very Unimportant (2)	Neither Important nor Unimportant (3)	Very Important (4)	Extremely Important (5)
To be closer to relatives (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To be nearer friends and acquaintances (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To be farther from family and relatives (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A better environment for raising children (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To find a less congested place to live (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To find a safer place to live (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To lower the cost of housing (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To have lower taxes (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To live in a desirable natural environment (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To find more outdoor recreational activities (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To find arts, entertainment, and cultural activities (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To find a simpler pace of life (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To have more ethnic diversity (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To have less ethnic diversity (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This community shares my attitudes/values (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To lower the cost of living (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To have a more desirable climate (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To get more affordable health care (18)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To find higher quality housing (19)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To obtain a higher paying job (20)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To obtain a job with a nurturing and social work environment (21)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To obtain a job where I can make a	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

difference (22)					
To obtain a job with opportunities for advancement (23)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To obtain a job that allows me to pay off student loans (24)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance (25)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To obtain a graduate degree (26)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To secure a better job for my spouse/partner (27)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (28)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q2 When choosing a community as a college graduate, rank the five most important factors involved in the decision, with "1" being most important, "2" being second most important, etc.

- \_\_\_\_\_ To be closer to relatives (1)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To be nearer friends and acquaintances (2)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To be farther from family and relatives (3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To find better quality local schools (4)
- \_\_\_\_\_ A better environment for raising children (5)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To find a less congested place to live (6)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To find a safer place to live (7)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To lower the cost of housing (8)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To have lower taxes (9)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To live in a desirable natural environment (10)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To find more outdoor recreational activities (11)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To find arts, entertainment, and cultural activities (12)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To find a simpler pace of life (13)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To have more ethnic diversity (14)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To have less ethnic diversity (15)
- \_\_\_\_\_ This community shares my attitudes/values (16)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To lower the cost of living (17)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To have a more desirable climate (18)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To get more affordable health care (19)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To find higher quality housing (20)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To obtain a higher paying job (21)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To obtain a job with a nurturing and social work environment (22)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To obtain a job where I can make a difference (23)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To obtain a job that allows me to pay off student loans (24)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance (25)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To obtain a graduate degree (26)
- \_\_\_\_\_ To secure a better job for my spouse/partner (27)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (28)

Q3 Currently, what importance do you place on the following community and life factors?

	Not at all Important (1)	Very Unimportant (2)	Neither Important nor Unimportant (3)	Very Important (4)	Extremely Important (5)
Suitable housing and neighborhoods (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Affordable housing (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feeling of "belonging" in the community (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
State taxes (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Property and other local taxes (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clean environment (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job security (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Available job opportunities (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership opportunities (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities to join local organizations (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Crime rate (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Police protection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



(12)					
Fire protection (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Health care services (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School system (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Living near family and relatives (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Living near friends and acquaintances (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Educational opportunities (18)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entertainment (19)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Retail shopping (20)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internet services (21)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cellular phone service (22)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Standard of living (23)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environment for children (24)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local government (25)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Natural, scenic or recreational amenities (26)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community appearance (27)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Household	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

income (28)					
Work-Life Balance (29)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (30)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q4 In what state and county is your current community? If you are a 2014 graduate, in what state and county do you plan to live after graduation?

State (1)

County (2)

Q5 What is the population of your current community? If you are a 2014 graduate, what is the population of the community in which you plan to live after graduation?

- ☐ Less than 500 (1)
- ☐ 500-999 (2)
- ☐ 1,000-4,999 (3)
- ☐ 5,000-9,999 (4)
- ☐ 10,000-39,999 (5)
- ☐ 40,000-99,999 (6)
- ☐ 100,000-299,999 (7)
- ☐ More than 300,000 (8)

Q6 When choosing a community as a college graduate, did you obtain information from any of the following sources? Check all that apply.

- ☐ Internet (1)
- ☐ TV, magazines, newspapers, business publications (2)
- ☐ Current community resident (3)
- ☐ Employer or co-workers (4)
- ☐ Friends and acquaintances (5)
- ☐ Family (6)
- ☐ Travel or vacation to new location (7)
- ☐ Attended school or college in new location (8)
- ☐ Recruitment information from community (9)
- ☐ Recruitment information from high school alumni association (10)
- ☐ Recruitment information from employer (11)
- ☐ Other (specify): (12) \_\_\_\_\_

Q7 When choosing a community as a college graduate, what other locations did you consider?

- ☐ Only that location (1)
- ☐ Other locations in the same state (2)
- ☐ Other locations in other states (3)
- ☐ Other locations both in this state and other states (4)
- ☐ Other (please specify): (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Q8 When choosing a community as a college graduate, had you ever been to the community you chose before?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To If yes, which of the following descri...If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Block

Q9 If yes, which of the following describe your contact with this community before you moved here? Check all that apply

- ☐ Lived here previously (1)
- ☐ Vacationed in a community or traveled through during vacation (2)
- ☐ Visited family that lived there (3)
- ☐ Visited community during work-related travel (4)
- ☐ Visited friends that lived here (5)
- ☐ Attended college here (6)
- ☐ Other: (7) \_\_\_\_\_

Q10 What is your gender?

- ☐ Male (1)
- ☐ Female (2)

Q11 What is your age?

- ☐ 20 years (1)
- ☐ 21 years (2)
- ☐ 22 years (3)
- ☐ 23 years (4)
- ☐ 24 years (5)
- ☐ 25 years (6)
- ☐ 26 years (7)
- ☐ 27 years (8)
- ☐ 28 years (9)
- ☐ 29 years (10)
- ☐ 30 years (11)

Q12 In what calendar year did you complete your undergraduate degree?

- ☐ 2007 (1)
- ☐ 2008 (2)
- ☐ 2009 (3)
- ☐ 2010 (4)
- ☐ 2011 (5)
- ☐ 2012 (6)
- ☐ 2013 (7)
- ☐ 2014 (8)

Q13 In what academic area is your undergraduate degree? Check more than one area, if applicable.

- ☐ Education and Human Sciences (1)
- ☐ Business Administration (2)
- ☐ Arts and Sciences (3)
- ☐ Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (4)
- ☐ Engineering (5)
- ☐ Architecture (6)
- ☐ Fine and Performing Arts (7)
- ☐ Journalism and Mass Communication (8)
- ☐ Public Affairs and Community Service (9)

Q14 In what industry or industries do you have work experience? Check all that apply.

- ☐ Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting (1)
- ☐ Utilities (2)
- ☐ Construction (3)
- ☐ Manufacturing (4)
- ☐ Wholesale Trade (5)
- ☐ Retail Trade (6)
- ☐ Transportation and Warehousing (7)
- ☐ Information (8)
- ☐ Finance and Insurance (9)
- ☐ Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (10)
- ☐ Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (11)
- ☐ Management of Companies and Enterprises (12)
- ☐ Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (13)
- ☐ Educational Services (including private, state, and local government schools) (14)
- ☐ Health Care and Social Assistance (including private, state, and local government hospitals) (15)
- ☐ Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (16)
- ☐ Accommodation and Food Services (17)
- ☐ Federal, State, and Local Government, excluding state and local schools and hospitals, and the US Postal Service (18)
- ☐ Other Services (please specify) (19) \_\_\_\_\_

Q15 For the next three questions, you will be asked about your "pre-college community." This refers to the community where you graduated high school and lived immediately before moving to Lincoln, Nebraska for your undergraduate degree. Consider this community when answering the following questions. In what state and county was your pre-college community?

State (1)

County (2)

Q16 How many years did you live in your pre-college community?

- ☐ 0 to 3 years (1)
- ☐ 4 to 7 years (2)
- ☐ 8 to 11 years (3)
- ☐ 12 to 15 years (4)
- ☐ 16 years or more (5)

Q17 What was the population of your pre-college community?

- ☐ Less than 500 (1)
- ☐ 500-999 (2)
- ☐ 1,000-4,999 (3)
- ☐ 5,000-9,999 (4)
- ☐ 10,000-39,999 (5)
- ☐ 40,000-99,999 (6)
- ☐ 100,000-299,999 (7)
- ☐ More than 300,000 (8)

Q18 Had you ever moved to a different community before coming to college? If so, how many times?

- ☐ No, I lived in the same community my whole life before coming to college. (1)
- ☐ Yes, I changed communities ONE time before coming to college. (2)
- ☐ Yes, I changed communities TWO times before coming to college. (3)
- ☐ Yes, I changed communities THREE times before coming to college. (4)
- ☐ Yes, I changed communities MORE THAN THREE times before coming to college. (5)

Q19 What was your approximate household income from all sources, before income taxes, for 2012. For those who are self-employed, please report your NET income after business expenses.

- ☐ Less than \$10,000 (1)
- ☐ \$10,000-\$19,999 (2)
- ☐ \$20,000-\$29,999 (3)
- ☐ \$30,000-\$39,999 (4)
- ☐ \$40,000-\$49,999 (5)
- ☐ \$50,000-\$59,999 (6)
- ☐ \$60,000-\$74,999 (7)
- ☐ \$75,000 or more (8)

Q20 Are you married?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

Q21 Do you have children?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

Q22 Which racial or ethnic group do you most closely identify yourself with?

- ☐ White (1)
- ☐ African American/Black (2)
- ☐ American Indian/Alaska Native (3)
- ☐ Spanish/Hispanic/Latino (4)
- ☐ Asian or Pacific Islander (5)
- ☐ Other (6) \_\_\_\_\_

Q23 What is your highest level of formal education?

- ☐ Bachelors Degree (1)
- ☐ Masters Degree (2)
- ☐ Doctorate or Professional Degree (3)
- ☐ Other (4) \_\_\_\_\_

Q24 When applying to colleges as a high school student, did you apply to out-of-state institutions?

- ☐ Yes, I applied for colleges that were outside of my home state. (1)
- ☐ No, I only applied to colleges that were in my home state. (2)

## APPENDIX F

### IRB Protocol and Scripts



## Informed Consent—Online Participants



**Participant Informed Consent Form**  
**Identifying Determinants of Post-College Migration for Participants in the Nebraska Human Resources Institute (NHRI)**

IRB # 13735

**Title:** Identifying Determinants of Post-College Migrations for NHRI Participants

**Purpose:**

This research project will aim to identify factors that determine the post-college migration of students who participated in NHRI. You are invited to participate in this study because you participated in NHRI as a college student.

**Procedures:**

You will be asked to complete a questionnaire regarding your process of deciding where to live after you graduated from college. The questionnaire will last 15 minutes. You will receive a link to the online survey through your active email account as listed in the NHRI alumni database. After completing the informed consent document, you will be permitted to complete the survey.

**Benefits:**

There are no direct benefits to you as a research participant. Indirect benefits to participants and others includes: building stronger Nebraska communities through their increased understanding of the needs and desires of future community leaders, supporting NHRI's goals of attracting and retaining community leaders in Nebraska, and would provide more opportunities for the participants as Nebraska communities better understand the community needs and desires of the participants.

**Risks and/or Discomforts:**

There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

**Confidentiality:**

Any information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept strictly confidential. No identifying information will be collected. The data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the office of Dr. Mark Balschweid (301c Ag Hall) and the research team will have access to the data during the study and for two years after the study is complete. The information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but the data will be reported as aggregated data.

**Opportunity to Ask Questions:**

You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. Or you may contact the investigator(s) at the phone numbers or email addresses listed below. Please contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board at (402) 472-6965 to voice concerns about the research or if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant.

**Freedom to Withdraw:**

Participation in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or in any other way receive a penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

**Consent, Right to Receive a Copy:**

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Selecting "YES. I agree to participate in the study having read and understood the information presented." certifies that you have decided to participate having read and understood the information presented. You will be emailed a copy of this consent form to keep.

**Name and Phone number of investigator(s)**

Jack Ehrke, Principal Investigator	Cell: (507) 317-8501	Email: jack.ehrke@gmail.com
Mark Balschweid, Ph.D., Secondary Investigator	Office (402) 472-3477	Email: mbalschweid2@unl.edu
Lindsay Hastings, Ph.D., Secondary Investigator	Office (402) 472-8738	Email: lhastings2@unl.edu

**Do you agree to participate having read and understood the information presented?**

- ☐ YES. I agree to participate having read and understood the information presented.
- ☐ NO. I do not agree to participate having read and understood the information presented.

## *Informed Consent—Paper and Pencil Participants*



INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP,  
EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

### **Identifying Determinants of Post-College Migrations for NHRI Participants**

Dear NHRI Senior,

This research project will aim to identify factors that determine the post-college migration of students in NHRI. You are invited to participate in this study because you have participated in NHRI as a college student. You will be asked to complete a questionnaire regarding your process of deciding where to live after college graduation. The procedure will last 15 minutes and will be conducted in a nearby room during your weekly NHRI project meeting.

There are no direct benefits to you as a research participant. Indirect benefits to participants and others includes: building stronger Nebraska communities through their increased understanding of the needs and desires of future community leaders, supporting NHRI's goals of attracting and retaining community leaders in Nebraska, and would provide more opportunities for the participants as Nebraska communities better understand the community needs and desires of the participants. Additionally, there are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

Any information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept strictly confidential. No identifying information will be collected in the study or on this informed consent form. The data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the office of Dr. Mark Balschweid (301c Ag Hall) and will only be seen by the research team during the study and for two years after the study is complete. The information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but the data will be reported as aggregated data.

You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. Or you may contact the investigator(s) at the phone numbers or email addresses listed below. Please contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board at (402) 472-6965 to voice concerns about the research or if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or in any other way receive a penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Since all eligible students will receive both an informed consent form and questionnaire, your informed consent to participate will be signified by your completion and submission of the questionnaire. All questionnaires, regardless of completion, will be returned to research assistant, Seth Barnes, to ensure anonymity of those choosing not to complete the questionnaire. Please keep this informed consent form for your records.

**YOU ARE VOLUNTARILY MAKING A DECISION TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY. BY COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE, YOU ARE IMPLYING CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY ACCORDING TO THE TERMS OUTLINED ON THIS INFORMED CONSENT FORM.**

If there are any questions regarding the study, feel free to contact the research team at the information provided below. We sincerely appreciate your consideration to participate in the study.

#### **Name and Phone number of investigator(s)**

Jack Ehrke, Principal Investigator	Cell: (507) 317-8501	Email: jack.ehrke@gmail.com
Mark Balschweid, Ph.D., Secondary Investigator	Office (402) 472-3477	Email: mbalschweid2@unl.edu
Lindsay Hastings, Ph.D., Secondary Investigator	Office (402) 472-8738	Email: lhastings2@unl.edu

*Script for Administration of Paper and Pencil Survey*

Script for Current NHRI Seniors before taking survey (read by Seth Barnes)

“Good evening NHRI seniors. As indicated in the email sent to you in the past week, I am here to provide an opportunity to participate in a study conducted by NHRI Graduate Research Assistant, Jack Ehrke, and his research team of Dr. Mark Balschweid and Dr. Lindsay Hastings. The study seeks to determine factors that influence the migration of NHRI students after they graduate from college. You are chosen because you are an NHRI student who will soon graduate from college.

Feel free to follow along with this introduction by viewing the informed consent form you received as you entered the room. You will be asked to complete a questionnaire regarding your process of deciding where to live after you graduate from college. The procedures will last 15 minutes.

There are no direct benefits to you as a research participant. Indirect benefits to you and others includes: building stronger Nebraska communities through their increased understanding of the needs and desires of future community leaders, supporting NHRI's goals of attracting and retaining community leaders in Nebraska, and would provide you with more opportunities as Nebraska communities better understand the community needs and desires of community leaders. Additionally, there are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

Any information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept strictly confidential. No identifying information will be collected in the questionnaire or on this informed consent form. The data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the office of Dr. Mark Balschweid (301c Ag Hall) and will only be seen by the research team during the study and for two years after the study is complete. The information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but the data will be reported as aggregated data.

You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. Or you may contact the investigator(s) at the phone numbers or email addresses listed below. Please contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board at (402) 472-6965 to voice concerns about the research or if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or in any other way receive a penalty or loss of benefits to which you

are otherwise entitled. All eligible students will receive both an informed consent form and questionnaire, so your informed consent to participate will be signified by your completion and submission of the questionnaire. All questionnaires, regardless of completion, will be returned to me [Seth Barnes], to ensure anonymity of those choosing not to complete the questionnaire. Please keep the informed consent for your personal records.

**YOU ARE VOLUNTARILY MAKING A DECISION TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY. BY COMPLETING THE QUESTIONNAIRE, YOU ARE IMPLYING CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY ACCORDING TO THE TERMS OUTLINED ON THIS INFORMED CONSENT FORM.**

If there are any questions regarding the study, feel free to contact the research team at the information provided on the informed consent form.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration to participate in the study.

At this time, I would like to answer any questions before beginning the survey [pause for questions]. If consenting to complete the survey, it is most helpful to the researchers if you complete every item on the questionnaire.

If there are no more questions, please begin the questionnaire. Return only your questionnaire to this envelope once you are finished.”

*Email Sent One Week Prior to Online Study*

“NHRI Alum,

I hope this message finds you well! NHRI is continuing to learn more about our outstanding student leaders through research, and we're pleased to invite you to participate in our next study. NHRI Graduate Research Assistant, Jack Ehrke, Dr. Mark Balschweid, and I have developed a survey study seeking to identify determinants of post-college migration for students who participated in NHRI. Since you were a member of NHRI, we would sincerely value your participation in this study.

Next week you will receive a link to the online survey through your active email account. The survey takes 15 minutes to complete. Once again, thank you for considering our study—we highly value your participation.

Best regards,

Dr. Lindsay Hastings

Jack Ehrke

Dr. Mark Balschweid

**Name and Phone number of investigator(s)**

Jack Ehrke, Principal Investigator  
Mark Balschweid, Ph.D., Secondary Investigator  
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*Email Sent One Week Prior to Paper and Pencil Study*

“NHRI Nation,

My name is Jack Ehrke and I am the Graduate Research Assistant for NHRI. Together with Dr. Lindsay Hastings and Dr. Mark Balschweid, we have developed a survey study seeking to identify determinants of post-college migration for students who participated in NHRI. Since you are a senior member of NHRI, we would sincerely value your participation in this study.

In the next week, research assistant, Seth Barnes, will attend your weekly project meeting to provide an opportunity for you to participate in the study. The survey takes 15 minutes to complete. Once again, thank you for considering our study—we highly value your participation.

Best regards,

Jack Ehrke

Dr. Lindsay Hastings

Dr. Mark Balschweid

**Name and Phone number of investigator(s)**

Jack Ehrke, Principal Investigator  
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Email: jack.ehrke@gmail.com  
Email: mbalschweid2@unl.edu  
Email: lhastings2@unl.edu”

*Follow-up Email to Online Participants*

“NHRI Alum,

We wanted to remind you of the opportunity to participate in our survey study to determine factors that influence post-college migration among participants in NHRI. To begin the survey, click on the link below.

“Survey Link”

The survey takes 15 minutes to complete. Your participation is critical to the success of this study, and we sincerely appreciate your time and consideration. If you have any questions related to the study, do not hesitate to contact us using the information provided below.

Best regards,

Dr. Lindsay Hastings

Jack Ehrke

Dr. Mark Balschweid

**Name and Phone number of investigator(s)**

Jack Ehrke, Principal Investigator  
 Mark Balschweid, Ph.D., Secondary Investigator  
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 Email: mbalschweid2@unl.edu  
 Email: lhastings2@unl.edu”

## APPENDIX G

Table A1

*Full results of independent samples t-test for survey question one*

Factors	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
To be closer to relatives	3.71	92	.000*	.717	.193	.333	1.100
To be nearer friends and acquaintances	3.71	92	.000*	.717	.193	.333	1.100
To be farther from family and relatives	-.88	92	.382	-.147	.167	-.479	.185
A better environment for raising children	2.67	92	.009*	.721	.270	.184	1.258
To find a less congested place to live	2.78	92	.007*	.678	.244	.193	1.162
To find a safer place to live	4.36	92	.000*	1.042	.239	.567	1.517
To lower the cost of housing	3.92	92	.000*	.867	.221	.428	1.307
To have lower taxes	2.82	91	.006*	.587	.208	.174	1.000
To live in a desirable natural environment	1.03	91	.304	.220	.213	-.203	.642

*(Table A1 continues)*



*(Table A1 continued)*

Factors	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
To find more outdoor recreational activities	.24	92	.812	.05	.21	-.37	.47
To find arts, entertainment, and cultural activities	.98	92	.332	.20	.20	-.20	.60
To find a simpler pace of life	3.18	92	.002*	.74	.23	.28	1.19
To have more ethnic diversity	-1.36	92	.178	-.30	.22	-.75	.14
To have less ethnic diversity	1.81	92	.073	.31	.17	-.03	.65
This community shares my attitudes/values	2.86	91	.005*	.60	.21	.18	1.02
To lower the cost of living	2.86	92	.005*	.60	.21	.18	1.01
To have a more desirable climate	-.62	92	.538	-.13	.21	-.55	.29
To get more affordable health care	1.70	92	.092	.33	.19	-.05	.70
To find higher quality housing	1.48	92	.143	.32	.22	-.11	.75

*(Table A1 continues)*

(Table A1 continued)

Factors	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
To obtain a higher paying job	.20	92	.846	.04	.22	-.40	.49
To obtain a job with a nurturing and social work environment	1.22	91	.226	.23	.19	-.14	.60
To obtain a job where I can make a difference	1.20	92	.232	.17	.14	-.11	.45
To obtain a job with opportunities for advancement	.97	92	.334	.18	.19	-.19	.56
To obtain a graduate degree	-1.13	92	.260	-.34	.30	-.94	.26
To secure a better job for my spouse/partner	.23	92	.818	.06	.28	-.49	.62
To obtain a job that allows me to pay off my student loans	.62	92	.539	.18	.30	-.41	.78
To obtain a job that allows for a quality work-life balance	1.22	91	.227	.25	.21	-.16	.67

*Note.* \* $p < 0.05$ . Factors ranked on scale of 1 to 5, with '1' being "Not at all important", '2' being "Very Unimportant," '3' being "Neither Important nor Unimportant," '4' being "Very Important," and '5' being "Extremely Important." Significant factors are listed in descending order according to the mean score of participants currently living in Nebraska.

## APPENDIX H

Table A3

*Full results of independent samples t-test for survey question three*

Factors	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Suitable housing and neighborhoods	2.27	117	.025*	.33	.15	.04	.62
Affordable Housing	2.51	91.109	.014*	.35	.14	.07	.63
Feeling of "Belonging" in the community	2.98	117	.004*	.37	.12	.12	.61
State Taxes	1.63	117	.105	.29	.18	-.06	.65
Property and Other Local Taxes	1.85	117	.067	.34	.18	-.02	.70
Clean Environment	2.05	117	.043*	.28	.14	.01	.56
Job Security	.18	117	.855	.03	.13	-.24	.29
Available Job Opportunities	-.31	117	.761	-.04	.13	-.29	.22
Leadership Opportunities	1.12	117	.263	.17	.15	-.13	.47
Opportunities to Join Local Organizations	.99	94.533	.324	.16	.16	-.16	.47
Crime Rate	-.56	117	.575	-.10	.18	-.47	.26
Police Protection	1.69	117	.093	.29	.17	-.05	.64
Fire Protection	1.52	117	.130	.28	.18	-.08	.63
Health Care Services	1.98	116	.050	.36	.18	.00	.72

*(Table A3 continues)*

(Table A3 continued)

Factors	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
School System	1.85	117	.067	.43	.23	-.03	.88
Living Near Friends and Acquaintances	2.53	96.398	.013*	.43	.17	.09	.76
Educational Opportunities	-.35	117	.728	-.06	.17	-.39	.26
Entertainment	1.32	92.633	.191	.22	.17	-.11	.55
Retail Shopping	1.53	95.909	.129	.28	.19	-.08	.65
Internet Services	.92	117	.362	.18	.19	-.21	.56
Cellular Phone Services	1.81	117	.072	.34	.19	-.03	.72
Standard of Living	1.23	117	.222	.19	.15	-.11	.49
Environment for Children	2.28	117	.024*	.54	.24	.07	1.01
Local Government	2.17	117	.032*	.38	.18	.03	.73
Natural, Scenic, or Recreational Amenities	-.23	117	.818	-.03	.15	-.33	.26
Community Appearance	2.04	117	.043*	.30	.15	.01	.59
Household Income	1.55	117	.123	.26	.16	-.07	.58
Work-Life Balance	.75	117	.458	.11	.15	-.18	.40

*Note.* \* $p < 0.05$ . Factors ranked on scale of 1 to 5, with '1' being "Not at all important", '2' being "Very Unimportant," '3' being "Neither Important nor Unimportant," '4' being "Very Important," and '5' being "Extremely Important." Significant factors are listed in descending order according to the mean score of participants currently living in Nebraska.